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THE Japanese military authorities have celebrated the New Year by attacking and taking the walled city of Shanhaikwan in the province of Jehol. Seven aeroplanes, a score of field guns, and two destroyers are reported, from Chinese sources, to have taken part in the attack. It is also stated that 100 shells were dropped on the city, and that a battalion of 500 Chinese soldiers was wiped out in street fighting. There are the usual allegations of local Chinese provocation, but these are perfunctory and entirely unconvincing. The situation is one of the utmost gravity. Japan appears to have embarked upon the invasion of Inner Mongolia. She has chosen the occasion to do so a fortnight before the Committee of Nineteen meets at Geneva to decide on a course of action based on the Lytton Report.

Japan and World Opinion

This certainly looks like an insolent challenge to the civilised world. It would be wise, however, not to overlook the possibility that the Japanese soldiers in Manchuria have acted on their own authority and that they, if no one else, regard the incident as a purely local skirmish. At the inauguration of "Manchukuo" last March, Jehol was included in the new State, though the province has hitherto remained unaffected by political changes in Manchuria. The Japanese, therefore, regard it as part of their settled policy "to expel the rebels from Jehol," and they may argue that an attack on Shanhaikwan should not be viewed by the rest of the world as a new act of aggression against China. If the Japanese are under any such misapprehension, we hope that they will be speedily enlightened. The League Council has so far scarcely attempted to deal with Japan, but the Assembly has taken a stronger line, and it is the Assembly with which Japan will now have to deal. Moreover, the position in Manchuria is immensely complicated by the great Japanese economic interests there and its loose attachment to the rest of China. An invasion of Jehol raises a simpler issue, and Japan may find that by this display of indifference to world opinion she has convinced the waverers and united the powers of civilisation against her. The threat to withdraw from the League would be an extremely feeble retort to condemnation by the League for a breach of the Covenant.

Mr. De Valera's Plunge

Mr. De Valera seems to have taken everybody by surprise with his sudden announcement of a General Election. Polling is to take place on January 24th, and the new Dail is to assemble on February 8th. The great majority of Mr. De Valera's supporters and all his allies in the Labour Party were completely in the dark as to his intentions until his statement was made in the first hour of Tuesday morning. Even now there is much speculation as to his

motives. He has had disagreements with the Labour Party over the cuts in Civil Servants' salaries and various points of economic policy, especially in relation to the railways, but there has been no fundamental divergence and no serious threat of the withdrawal of Labour support. Possibly the movement towards unity among his opponents had more to do with the decision than any unrest among his supporters. There was, moreover, a very awkward Budget looming ahead. Whatever his motives, Mr. De Valera has taken the plunge, and his fate will be awaited with painful interest on this side of the Irish Sea.

* * *

The miserable policy of economic reprisals against the Irish Free State has received wide support on the ground that it would tend to weaken Mr. De Valera's electoral position. It is interesting to note, therefore, that now we have come to the testing time there is no great confidence among supporters of reprisals as to the outcome. Our own view was, and is, that the device of punitive import taxes is likely to recoil upon those who adopt it, and also extremely nicely calculated to foment the spirit of violent nationalism in Ireland and thus to strengthen Fianna Fail. We should be more optimistic about Mr. Cosgrave's prospects if Great Britain had been willing to come to terms with Mr. De Valera on the formation of an Arbitral Tribunal. As things are, the issue is doubtful. A narrow majority on one side or the other is generally expected. If Mr. De Valera is overthrown we shall presumably make a rapid and generous settlement with his successors. If his hands are strengthened we shall know that our " resolute " policy has failed, and our Government will have to choose between an indefinite prolongation of economic war with Ireland, or another attempt to come to terms with the most intractable negotiator in the world.

Liquidation in Chile

The new Chilean Government has promptly wound up " Cosach," the great Chilean nitrate combine which was formed less than two years ago. It is now announced that the formation was illegal; and three liquidators are being appointed to wind up the business, and refloat it on a new basis. In this way it is hoped to liquidate the enormous losses which the combine has incurred, and to make a new start with the reorganisation of Chile's principal export trade, on which she relies for meeting the greater part of her foreign obligations. In 1929 and 1930 nitrates accounted for not far short of half the total value of Chilean exports, and copper for another third. In face of the collapse of prices for these goods, it is not surprising that she has been driven first to default and then to a succession of confusing and indecisive revolutions. Cosach was an international affair, in which British interests were represented, though the Americans had a substantially larger share than we. Its winding up, and the liquidation of its capital of £75,000,000, and its losses of over a hundred million gold pesos during the past year will raise delicate international problems. *Sic transit* yet another of the grandiose schemes formed with the object of holding up the market for a single commodity in face of the general depression.

The Financial Prospect

The usual crop of preliminary figures for the past year has become available during the past week. The returns of revenue and expenditure show little, except that the prospect of a good ending to the financial year depends on success in collecting a very big sum in income tax during the next few months. Savings in cheaper interest rates on Treasury Bills and other short-term borrowing have been fully offset by the payment of interest on the American debt, for which no provision was made in the Budget. There has not yet been time for the effects of the big conversion scheme to appear in the returns, as the last payment of interest was at the old rate. The Bank returns show a sharp fall in the margins available for banking expenses and profits, as a result partly of lower rates on short-term loans, and partly of the fall in industrial overdrafts. The circulation of currency showed less than the usual Christmas expansion; but the figures have been upset this year by changes in banking practice, as the bankers seem to have worked on a smaller margin of till-money. Retail trade, still contracting in the industrial districts, shows an expansion in London, despite falling prices; and the big stores have had an unexpectedly big Christmas turnover. Altogether the signs point neither to recovery nor to any desperate worsening of the situation. World conditions are still on the whole getting worse; but Great Britain appears to be " dragging along the bottom " without much discomfort, except for the unemployed.

Mr. Lansbury's Appeal

Low has never done a truer cartoon than his picture of the interview between Mr. MacDonald and Mr. George Lansbury. For the principal person at that interview must surely have been the Ramsay MacDonald of ten years ago, whom Low depicted as coming to dress down the Ramsay MacDonald of to-day. Did it pass unnoticed at that interview that Mr. MacDonald might himself have been thrown into jail at any moment during the war for activities which the Government then regarded as even worse than Tom Mann's to-day? Mr. Lansbury and his two friends are all old colleagues of the Prime Minister's; they have heard him speak eloquently in the past on behalf of free speech, and cheered his denunciations of ministers who shelved their responsibility with just the official phrases and pretexts which were all the response he could give to Mr. Lansbury. Mr. Lansbury and his friends should be honoured for their apparently fruitless journey to Lossiemouth and it is to be hoped that many Liberals who feel that constitutional liberties ought not to be surrendered without a struggle will respond to Mr. Lansbury's appeal—it was not a party appeal—for a united effort in defence of civil liberty. For the fact that Tom Mann is a Communist is irrelevant to this issue—which is simply whether people are to be brought before the courts in order to stop them committing hypothetical offences which the police consider them likely to commit some time in the future.

The Means Test in Swansea

The Swansea Public Assistance Committee has now shared the fate of a number of others in the industrial districts in its administration of the Means Test. As it has failed to satisfy the Government of its willingness to carry out the test with the requisite stringency, it is to be superseded by a Commissioner appointed by Whitehall, who can be relied upon to do the official bidding without question. It may well be doubted whether the Committee

will feel any grief at being thus relieved of its duties. Administering the Means Test is a thankless and ungrateful task which never ought to have been entrusted to the Local Authorities. The "test," as long as it is allowed to survive at all, ought to be administered nationally, in accordance with a uniform system publicly proclaimed and open to public criticism. Our complaint against the Government is not that it has taken over Swansea, but that it has not taken over other places as well. At present the threat of supersession hangs over Committees with Labour sympathies; but the most reactionary authorities are wholly immune from it, however far they may carry the policy of saving the taxpayers' pockets at the expense of the unemployed. The Means Test ought to go; and, if it is to be retained, at the very least it ought to be uniformly administered in accordance with known and published rules, and under a single authority open to the fire of public comment.

The B.B.C. in Hot Water

Wrath has descended upon the head of the B.B.C., not because of the inexplicable broadcast by Mr. Stobart on New Year's Eve, but because on the same night it indulged in a pacifist tour of Europe. Colonel Moore-Brabazon even goes so far as to describe the B.B.C. as a "Cheka," and its effort to call attention to the armed dangers of Europe as airing its "pet political views." The Polish Ambassador has complained bitterly because the broadcast made the perfectly true statement that in that land of poverty a third of the budget is devoted to military expenditure. The only point of substance in all this attack is that the broadcast was somewhat invidiously expressed. The reference to Germany's disarmed condition was not happily worded, and while pointing out the beam in Poland's eye it would have been wise also to mention the mote in our own.

GOLD AND FAITH IN KENYA

SINCE the discovery of gold has usually been considered a sufficient justification for abandoning the most elementary decencies of human behaviour, it is perhaps a sign of improvement that the comments made in this paper, in the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Spectator* and the *Economist* upon the serious situation in Kenya should be followed up by authoritative warnings from Lord Lugard and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and that even the *Times* should admit a sense of uneasiness at the prospect of the expropriation of the Kavirondo and the threat of a new Rand. There are, of course, very special reasons for "uneasiness" for, in this case, the opening up of the new goldfield by private enterprise involves the violation of one of the most deliberate and explicit pledges ever made by this or any other country. The Native Land Trust Ordinance not only promised that the natives shall have perpetual security in the overcrowded reserves left to them after the seizure of their best land by white immigrants: it also stated that it would be a "flagrant breach of trust" to permit any encroachment upon the reserves except for such public purposes as the building of roads, railways, schools and hospitals. In such cases no land should be alienated without full public inquiry and without compensation to the natives which should be paid in land not only of equal area but also as far as possible of equal value. Now if the new gold mine discovered in the Kavirondo reserve were opened as a public enterprise by the State the problem of how to fulfil this pledge to the natives would at once arise. But no such proposal is afoot: the new gold mine is apparently to be worked for private profit according to the time-dishonoured methods of the past, and as if in order to expose its indifference to any considerations of honour the Kenya Legislative Council has proceeded immediately to rid itself of the Land Trust Ordinance by passing amendments dispensing with both the public inquiry and the compensation in land to the dispossessed natives. And when Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, who as Colonial Secretary represents the Crown in this matter, is asked for his assent to these preposterous amendments, he has the audacity to defend them in the House of Commons and to suggest that the natives (to whom money compensation means almost nothing except a further invitation to white speculators to exploit them) will be quite satisfied because a reassuring document has been read to them! Even this shred of excuse seems in danger of being snatched away by a statement from Kenya that no such document has ever been read to the natives.

No wonder that the Chief Native Commissioner who is the white official responsible for the welfare of the natives found himself in a hopeless and ironic position when he stood up to propose these amendments. No wonder he admitted that no money compensation would induce the natives willingly to give up their land.

> "I am afraid," he said, "that we shall have to hurt their feelings, wound their susceptibilities and in some cases violate their most cherished and sacred traditions by moving natives from a piece of land on which they had the right to live and settling them on another piece, the holders of which would have the right to eject them."

When he added that "we had to face these difficulties" and that however "unpopular" forcible expropriation would be with the natives, "if gold is found on their lands, that gold must be developed," he revealed himself as a man who is not without conscience but who is manifestly unable to defend the rights of his wards. He did not add, as he should have done, that Kenya natives are no longer the docile dupes they once were, and that if this act of expropriation is permitted there can be no peace between blacks and whites in Kenya and no hope of regaining the confidence of a population whom we shall have shamelessly betrayed.

We would wish to add one further remark which is too seldom made in this country. There are in Kenya nearly three million natives and about 15,000 whites, amongst whom only a few thousand are genuine settlers, farming their land and contributing to the permanent welfare of the country. Most of these farmers—we can neglect the few notorious exceptions—are on good terms with their native workers and express, in private at least, nothing but contempt for the clique of well-to-do persons who meet—sometimes in ludicrously small numbers—and speak on their behalf in the Convention of Associations. They are permitted to do so because the genuine settlers are too hard-working, too scattered, and too poor to take an active part in politics. When we express the hope that every effort will be made to prevent the Royal Assent being given to the amending Bill passed by the Legislative Council we are not making any attack upon men who have a hard struggle to live and who would, if they were politically conscious and organised, be the last persons to desire this country to break its pledges and open a disastrous new chapter in the history of Kenya.

THE PEASANTS AND THE BOLSHEVIKS

THE first Five Year Plan ended with the old year. The Russian press is the last place to which most people in this country would think of turning for a realistic account of its successes and failures. That is because English people, who have few opportunities of discovering for themselves what appears in the Russian newspapers, labour under the carefully fostered delusion that *Pravda* and *Izvestia* (which, with their seven-figure circulations, are merely the largest of hundreds of Soviet newspapers) are compelled to suppress the gloomy side of Russian life and to represent Soviet Russia as an earthly paradise. This delusion has, no doubt, the advantage of enhancing the importance of special correspondents in Riga and elsewhere, whose information, in so far as it is anything more than a *réchauffé* of rumours gathered from White Russian exiles, is in fact largely drawn from the Soviet press and the almost equally outspoken and critical Soviet wireless. We do not suggest that the Russian press is not, on questions of high policy, controlled by the Government, just as the press is controlled in every autocratic regime in Europe, but that its propaganda, so far from being designed to hide the unpalatable truth, is in fact directed to emphasising every deficiency, to portraying in the blackest colours the realities of the food shortage, the overcrowding of the Russian towns, the poor record of some of the industrial undertakings, and the tragic conditions on many collective farms. Its aim is to create not "confidence," which may be falsely based, but determination to endure hardship and overcome difficulties. If we are careful to interpret the mass of information in the Russian press in the light of the first-hand observation of the few reliable authorities and the regular comments of the five or six independent foreign correspondents in Moscow, it is not difficult to make a fairly accurate summary of the position at the end of the first Five Year Plan.

Beginning with an almost incredibly low standard of life, with a derelict industry and an entirely primitive state of agriculture, Russia has been equipped during the last four years with the most modern machinery, has built up on the American model some of the largest industrial plants in the world, and turned herself from an almost purely agricultural into a great industrial nation. Even in the heavy industries, which were the main objective of the first plan, the results are not a hundred per cent. successful. Transport is admittedly a weak link in the chain and in neither coal, pig-iron or steel has the estimated production been fully reached. The failure to produce the projected output of these raw materials has naturally reacted on industry, but when we also take into account the lack of technical skill in Russia, the difficulty of giving foreign experts the conditions of life to which they are accustomed, the utter lack of mechanical knowledge or factory experience among the vast mass of Russian workers, the extreme mobility of Russian labour (a report from one group of metal factories which employs 61,000 men states that 260,000 workers have actually been engaged there during the last three years)—when we take all these things into consideration and remember that the whole tradition of Russian administration is one of inefficiency and graft, the surprising thing is, not that the number of automobiles and tractors and other entirely new industrial products have failed to reach the planned figures, but that a steady stream of usable trucks, tractors, cars, and other new products is actually being turned out every day. The quality of most manufactured articles seems deplorable on Western standards, but the majority of the people who are now being supplied with such things as leather shoes would never have dreamt of possessing them at all under the Tsarist regime, and the universal shortage of what we in the West regard as common necessities in Russia is the result, not of a breakdown of existing supplies, but of a failure to fulfil promises boldly made to a hundred and twenty million illiterate peasants. At a time when there are some 30,000,000 unemployed in the capitalist world, the Soviet Government can fairly boast that it provides work for everyone: at a time when blast furnaces are silent and mills closing down in every other industrial country, the Bolsheviks can point to Magnitogorsk, to forty great new industrial cities, and to an annual increase of 20 per cent. in productive capacity.

The figures of land collectivisation are even more remarkable, but, taken by themselves, much more misleading. To have abolished private cultivation of the land over 80 per cent. of Russia in the course of four years constitutes perhaps the most extraordinary example of ruthless energy that the world has ever known. In theory, the abolition of the mediaeval system of agriculture, and the introduction of great farms worked by tractors and combines, should have resulted in an immense increase in production. Large tracts of Russia are obviously well adapted for mechanised agriculture, and, whatever the incidental disasters, the Soviet Government can claim that they have made it forever impossible for the moujik to return to the ancient "strip" system, and that they have jolted and bullied at any rate the younger peasant out of a fatalistic complacence in his own small gains into some recognition of himself as part of a great collective whole. But the fact remains that in Russia, which should be the greatest food-producing country in the world, there is to-day an acute food shortage; that in getting rid of the Kulaks, the Bolsheviks lost not only the most competent farmers, but also at least half the cattle, horses, and other domestic animals in the country; that the standard of living has fallen abruptly during the last twelve months; and that there is a prospect of something like famine over considerable areas. It is not an adequate reply to point out that there were always famines in Russia, and that in the old days they passed almost unnoticed outside it. The test of Communism, after all, lies in its success in satisfying to an increasing degree the material and psychological needs of ordinary men and women. Its indictment of capitalism will carry little weight if the peasants are hungry, and less still, if the cause of hunger is not only bad harvests but also a policy which has driven the peasants themselves into refusing to plough, to weed, to sow, and to reap. That this is, in fact, the state of affairs over large areas there is, unfortunately, no doubt. Side by side with accounts of the great efforts that are being made to increase the live stock and overcome the administrative difficulties, the alarming facts are set out day by day in the Soviet newspapers. Day after day *Izvestia* describes the disastrous conditions of many of

the collectives, where the peasants, bewildered and exasperated, are "sabotaging" production. Various concessions have been made during the last six months, but no one imagines that the permission to sell their surplus produce at open market prices is sufficient in itself to reassure the peasants, and we may expect soon to see further efforts to conciliate the agrarian population.

The Soviet papers are boasting to-day that Russia has been made independent of Western capitalism by its new equipment of up-to-date industrial plant. But in purchasing this foreign machinery the Soviet Government incurred foreign debts, and in order to meet these payments —which has so far been done in every case—Russia has had to export grain, timber, and oil. Therefore the fall in world prices has affected Russia as it has affected every country. The present food shortage is, in part, the result of this dependence on the outside world. For the Government was led to make its initial miscalculation about the proper proportion of grain to take from the collective farms—especially from the Ukraine in the 1931 harvest—because of the need to pay for its imports by exporting grain. This year the Soviet Government is unable to export grain in large quantities and is the more anxious to offer oil and timber. We are glad to see that the British and Soviet Governments have now concluded their timber agreement.

The Second Five Year Plan, therefore, begins at a critical moment. The huge development of heavy industry does not immediately benefit the mass of the population; capitalist countries are slow to trade; and there is an immediate and overriding need for more food and for more consumption goods of every kind. The Second Plan promises to pay more attention to light industry, to concentrate more on providing for immediate wants, and less upon capital expenditure. The Soviet Government boasts, with justice, of an extraordinary moral and cultural advance. It is rapidly reducing illiteracy. The colossal circulation of books is perhaps the most astonishing single fact in Russia to-day. The Communist Party has brought education and a conception of hygiene into every village in Russia. But in human affairs the needs of the body come before the needs of the mind, and the villages are waiting for an assurance that if they produce food it will not be arbitrarily taken from them; the peasant will scarcely learn to appreciate the value of a school for his children if he is reduced to eating his seed crop instead of sowing it. The future of Russia turns upon whether the Government is capable, during the hard twelve months which now in any case confronts it, of establishing the confidence which it has lost among the peasants, and of beginning, if only slowly, to improve the standard of living.

NEW WAYS OF KEEPING BODY AND SOUL TOGETHER

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN VIENNA]

DURING the last year unemployment in Vienna did not diminish even in the summer months, when building is at its height. This winter tens of thousands who have been without work for more than two years, and who have since received the "distress relief" (an irregular dole), will now lose even the shred dividing them from naked want. How will they live? For though suicide has become the refuge of larger numbers of individuals in Austria than anywhere else in the world, yet the bulk of these miserable beings, shorn of everything save life, will try to preserve this their last capital, and they will succeed.

They will succeed. Growing marvel as it is, there is no doubt that they will somehow keep body and soul together, as they have done in past winters. Although hunger-scurvy has recently arrived, and although the number of unemployed has greatly increased, the situation is not materially changed, and of the tens of thousands who, according to logic and reason, must simply and crudely die of hunger and cold, only a small percentage will actually do so. How will the marvel be achieved?

Here are some explanations, gleaned partly in the law-courts, partly in the highways and by-ways. They do not include either prostitutes or actual criminals, though naturally here, as everywhere, the ranks of these are greatly swelled by men and women who would have remained honest under happier circumstances. I have not enumerated the mendicants, street-singers, etc., countless new variations of whom have blossomed out under present conditions, for it goes without saying that a huge percentage of the doleless unemployed live exclusively on private charity, which amounts to a large quantity in bulk, but is given out in the tiniest possible portions in coppers and slices of bread. Here are some of the new trades and professions.

1. *Bristle Brigands.*—A brushmaker was found dead in his little workshop, his head bashed in with his own hammer, and his meagre portfolio gone. The place, which contained no cash-box and no valuables, was undisturbed. It seemed likely, therefore, that his assailant was to be sought among the man's acquaintances who knew where he kept his money, The search soon concentrated itself on a group of young men who used to sell bristles to this man on the sly. Why on the sly? Because they were stolen. The investigations of the police brought to light the following facts. There is quite a numerous brotherhood of lads who manage to smuggle themselves into the great Vienna slaughter-house during the Monday, when the pigs are being driven in, and to hide among them. Possibly bribery of the porters sometimes makes this easier than it seems. They are locked in overnight, and they spend the dark hours in plucking the bristles from the backs of the hogs awaiting the morning when they will be made into pork. The lads slip out in the course of the Tuesday, the bloodstained bristles hidden under their shirts, and they sell them at half the regular market price to the small brush-makers who still eke out a living in the suburbs. This "trade" of bristle-puller can only be followed by agile and slender lads, or they would be detected easily when coming out. Of course, the criminal affair which brought the whole business to light—the murderer, by the by, was actually among the bristle-pullers—has doubled the watchfulness of the controllers in the abattoir, and has greatly diminished the chances of the job.

2. *Fat Fishers.*—In contrast to the bristle-pulling, this is a perfectly lawful trade, but even more unsavoury. The men pursuing it will leave it any day for all sorts of hard casual work, if only they can get it. Again a criminal affair drew the attention of people to this strange occupation—a fat-fisher who threw light on a most horrible murder mystery that had remained unsolved for days. He brought to the police a human paunch. None but the police knew then what a fat-fisher was and how he had come by his gruesome catch, but the public have since learned from the trial all about fat-fishers, and many curious people have been out to the place of their activity to watch.

The Vienna sewers are all gathered into one central drain that empties into the Danube just beyond the southern outskirts of the city. A huge black cavern, it opens yawning jaws out of the pleasant surface of the grass-grown slope of the riverside, and the clean green water (for the Danube is never blue, for all the songs to the contrary!) is defiled for a long stretch with the greasy grey and black of the sewage with which at first it refuses to mix. In summer and autumn, the prevalent decoration floating on the top of the dark stream is

lettuce and cabbage leaves; in winter and spring it is orange peel. Many other indeterminable things go with it, but these are the most clearly discernible ingredients of the unpleasant mixture. On the bank sit the fat-fishers, holding long rods with a small basket of wire netting instead of a hook at the end. This they dip into the mass, fishing out a white or yellow morsel of floating fat, and emptying it into a pail hanging at a convenient distance by a post rammed into the steep slope. Tuesday is their best day, for that is sticking-time in the abattoir, but it is worth their while to fish on other days of the week also. Some grease always congeals and floats on the top. Their plant costs nothing, neither does the goodwill of the business, and they get the equivalent of a halfpenny per pound for the fat from the soapmakers to whom they sell it.

3. *Refuse Rakers.*—I hate to write fully about this appalling occupation which is engaged in by regular workers as well as by some who do it as a casual job in addition to other work. I will content myself with saying that the Vienna dustbins are emptied on to a huge midden, miles in area, where coke and other useful oddments are fetched out of the ashes and the unspeakable refuse by men, women and children who scrabble in the muck with bare hands.

4. *Sewer Searchers.*—These consider themselves at a great advantage as against the muck rakers, and consequently take the smell, which is even more awful than that of the midden, quite philosophically. They say that they are protected from rain and frost underground, and then there is the great chance of finding—and unlawfully keeping—something of real value—a gold tooth, or even a ring or other trinket which has slipped in with the bath water. These men climb down into the drains overnight (sometimes they also sleep in the galleries leading to the sewers proper) and in the grey of the morning search for iron, rags, glass and the like.

5. *Cigarette Makers.*—These walk along the streets, eyes to the ground, often darting into the roadway at peril of their lives to get a cigar end that would otherwise be crushed by a coming car. They loiter at underground entrances and tram terminuses; and in front of theatres and cinemas. The cigar and cigarette ends collected in the course of the day are chopped up and rolled into "fresh" cigarettes, to be sold ten for a penny.

6. *Touts for Surgeons.*—This is quite the latest thing. The police have come upon the trace of a widespread organisation, consisting mostly of medical students in the Austrian university towns, who sterilised young men by vasectomy for a comparatively small fee. They pretended that the operation was reparable at will, which in most cases was not true. A very few were correctly operated (Schmerz method), but most of the victims are for ever barred from having issue and would never have had the operation performed had they known this. It was very difficult to trace the "surgeons," for they only appeared when the patient was lying *masked* on the operating table. But their "jackals," unemployed lads with a large circle of acquaintances among young workmen, have already been arrested by the dozen. They painted this operation in glowing colours to the boys, married and single, and found hundreds of victims, pocketing fifteen shillings per case as agent's fee for themselves.

7. *Mushroom Pickers.*—The Austrian woods are full of edible mushrooms, most of them known only to the very few. The writer herself, during the famine years in and after the great war, gathered and ate forty-seven species, and never poisoned herself. But it is true that there are some dangerous doubles among the toadstools, and as some of them bring about death at quite short notice, people are extremely nervous of eating any other species of mushrooms but the one known as "Herrenpilz," *boletus edulis*, a kind which has no poisonous double whatever. These are comparatively rare near Vienna (in Poland and Russia picking and drying them is quite a home industry), and especially in rainless summers, such as the last, their price is high in the markets. For the first time this year the Vienna unemployed have embarked on the venture of hiking out into the country and looking for them. It is by far the healthiest and pleasantest of their efforts that I can record, but it wants certain physical qualities, as well as a disposition that not many of these poor city mice have—sound lungs and hearts for climbing, lynx eyes for spying the brown things hiding among dry needles and leaves, hardiness to brave rainy weather (with shoes that are far from watertight), and above all, a certain adaptability to the life and the feel of the woods.

8. *Militia Men.*—This seems a strange occupation to be named as a job for despairing men, but the facts are as follows. The Fascists pay five shillings a day to their followers, dressing them in an excellent uniform and filling them full of beer when they want them for parades or for such other employment as rioting. It is well known that Starhemberg, once the leader of the Austrian Fascist Home Defence, spent so much money on this singular hobby that he went bankrupt. The lure of these five shillings drives many unemployed into the arms both of the Home Defence and of the Hitlerites, even though they may be far from sympathisers at heart.

These are some of the ways and means by which normal and honest human beings, the majority of them young people who have only just entered life on their own, many of them skilled workmen, some professional men, are driven to eke out what does not amount to a living, but to a sub-human existence for which the English language has no adequate word. As a short term expedient single individuals of the proletariat in most countries may come to know such an existence sooner or later, but it is something new when following occupations of these kinds, sleeping in sewer-galleries and eating one meal of potatoes or cabbage a day, or three a week, is the only rational hope that life offers.

A LONDON DIARY

I WONDER how many inglorious Miltons will cease to be mute as a result of Mr. Siepman's broadcast invitation to poets to submit original verse to the B.B.C.? I should expect a mighty flood—there are poets of my acquaintance who would think nothing of a cwt. of verse—and I respect the heroism of Mr. T. S. Eliot, Mr. Walter de la Mare and Mr. Edward Marsh, who have promised to read and select from the contributions sent in. It will be most interesting to see, when the selected verses are read to us in April, whether there really is a great deal of genuine poetic talent in the country waiting recognition. The Russians do something of the same sort: one of the big wireless stations at Leningrad regularly gives original musical selections submitted by unknown composers. The idea seems to me in every way excellent.

* * *

I do not believe in the possibility of eliminating the desire to fight from humankind because an organism without fight is dead or moribund. Life consists of tensions: there must be a balance of opposite polarities to make a personality, a nation, a world, or a cosmic system such as God planned. I believe that He planned war, just as He planned electricity or the force of gravity, but left it to man to canalise and regulate these powers so that they should be beneficent rather than destructive. We can support a League of Nations, but we must not, in our arrogance, imagine it superior to the Will of Creation. We might as well try to do away with gravity because of aeroplane accidents as think of abolishing war because good women suffer and brave men die.

It would be difficult to put into five sentences more nonsense than is contained in the above paragraph from an article contributed to last week's *Spectator*, and it is encouraging that believers in war should have been reduced to using such inconsequent arguments. (I am not, of course, suggesting that the *Spectator* shares the views of this contributor.) In the first sentence the word "fight" is disingenuously used in two different senses. Fighting between members of the same species except in connection with mating is rare even among the liveliest organisms, and war—that is, fighting between groups belonging to the same species—is probably not habitual to any animal save man. (Bees, I'm told, occasionally indulge in war, but this appears to be a

form of disease, and the swarm is afterwards useless.) The belief that God " planned " war is a return to the most barbarous concept of the Creator; it is hard to imagine a more extraordinary confusion of a mind than to think that war is the deliberate will of God, which we may do our best to prevent by a League of Nations, but which we must yet not prevent because that would be setting ourselves above the will of God! And the arrogance lies not in the supporters of the League of Nations but in the popular writer who identifies his own prejudices with what he calls the " Will of Creation." The article from which I quote is entitled, " Why I Believe In War," and is the work of Major Yeats-Brown. It is a specimen of what happens to cavalry officers when they become infected with the mysticism of Benares.

* * *

The January number of the *Architectural Review* is largely devoted to the Carlton House Terrace controversy. It includes answers to a questionnaire sent to over fifty persons, including Osbert Sitwell, Max Beerbohm, Aldous Huxley, Harold Nicolson, W. J. Turner, Laurence Binyon, Sir Josiah Stamp, H. A. L. Fisher, Kenneth Clark, Sir David Murray, R.A., and Professor Ernest Gardner. Clive Bell's answer seems most to the point:

> Of course I agree with you. Of course I think Carlton Gardens and Carlton House Terrace should be saved. Of course I loathe the idea of a Portland Stone monstrosity. But it's useless to protest. They have pulled down Regent Street and the Foundling Hospital, and they will pull down Waterloo Bridge. No building is respected in this country unless it has sentimental associations (birthplace of Lady Jane Grey or of W. G. Grace), or unless it happens to be a bit of rubbishy late Gothic. I wish you the best of luck, but you haven't a chance.

Every answer was a protest against the destruction of the Terrace except that of Viscount Weymouth, who regretted that he was not interested in its fate. His Lordship's regrets may be said to be well founded. The *Architect's Journal* throws some further light on the Crown as a landlord, by asserting that the paint used by the Crown in repainting the exterior of the terrace was far below the British standard. The writer states that " The Crown admitted that the results were unsatisfactory and that many complaints had been received, but took the line that the Commissioners were exempt by special Acts of Parliament from the ordinary responsibilities and liabilities of trustees or agents spending other people's money."

* * *

It is hard to remember as one watches the buses and motor coaches hurtling along our country roads that they are still legally limited to thirty miles an hour. To be passed by a motor coach when one is oneself doing nearly forty in a private car is not an uncommon experience. The question arises whether the driver is to blame or whether the responsibility may not really be the motor company's. A schedule may, I take it, be officially sanctioned and yet often in practice prove impossible to keep without exceeding the limits on stretches of open road. An account in the *Yorkshire Gazette* of an inquiry conducted by Yorkshire Traffic Commissioners suggests that some motor companies have an odd way of rewarding the lawless zeal of their drivers. But I will not spoil their naive testimony by further comment. Asked " what was the policy of the company when a driver was convicted for having exceeded the speed limit," a representative of the East Yorkshire Motor Services is reported to have said

> that a driver who exceeded the speed limit and was convicted was suspended without pay. If the offence was repeated he was dismissed from the service of the company.
>
> There were sometimes convictions resulting from drivers' zeal for their employers exceeding their discretion when they were late. *If the company was satisfied that the driver was acting in the company's interests he would be fined out of his wages.*

* * *

The County Wexford Beekeepers Association in Enniscorthy have been discussing whether to expel Mr. Bernard Shaw from membership on the ground that he is an " infidel " and has made " blasphemous statements " in his recent book, *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God.* How Mr. Shaw ever came to be a member of this Association I do not know, nor do I know whether beekeepers as a body are particularly prone to intolerance. I asked an experienced beekeeper about this last point. He explained that he would expect Old Testament morals from beekeepers because every beekeeper necessarily feels himself a little like Jehovah. He watches and controls a miniature world: he cares for it benevolently and can destroy it if he wills. Being fond of his bees, he is furiously angry if one of them turns from righteousness and stings him. I like this theory, but I doubt whether anything so complicated is necessary to explain the comic behaviour of the apiarists of Enniscorthy.

* * *

Mr. Mencken's *Americana* always contains good things. It appears that *Authors*, the official organ of the Authors' Exchange Association of New York, has just announced that *Joseph Conrad, well-known author, has just completed " Victory."* Another announcement which particularly pleases me is from the Methodist Publishing House.

> BOOKS
>
> Ten Cents each, twelve for $1.00
>
> These are all " good " books. That is what the authors told us about them. We have had some of these so long that we don't remember what the story is about. They will make swell shelf fillers, as most of them have pretty bindings. At this price they are cheaper than curtains over book cases. We measured them and they are less than a DOLLAR A YARD.

* * *

An organist for Roman Catholic services is required at Hammersmith Hospital, Ducane Road, Shepherd's Bush, W.12, for one service on each Sunday, and in addition not more than six special services a year. *The salary, subject to temporary reduction, is £15 a year.* Apply to the Medical Superintendent at the Hospital.

From the *London County Council Gazette.*

* * *

It is a fact, and perhaps one of the saddest ones of our industrial situation, that the demand for gigolos is not what it used to be.—Gilbert Frankau in the *Daily Mail.*

CRITIC

THE FETISH OF MATRIC.

IN 1904 there were 85,000 children in State-aided secondary schools; to-day there are nearly 370,000. This extension of our national system has been of such absorbing interest to those organising it that problems of organisation have tended to obscure the question of its quality. Syllabuses have been extended, curricula expanded, examinations multiplied. Nothing is wrong anywhere—except the result. And now, whether we like it or not, a Government department is forcing upon us a breathing space which we might all put to good purpose by re-examining the foundations of the system. Few enlightened reasons can be discovered to support the niggardly spirit of Circular 1421, for little economy in secondary education will be achieved by denying free places to the brighter children of the lower middle classes in view of the widespread waste resulting from misapplication of available resources. At present schoolmasters, education authorities, the Universities, the business world, and, above all, the examination system, manage to reduce by a good third the efficiency of the secondary system.

Secondary education is primarily a preparation for life of those who will receive no more full-time formal instruction after the age of 17. Consequently this stage of education should be based on its relevance, first to the growing personality of the child, i.e., to his intellectual development, especially to the freeing of his mind from fear and prejudice, and to the correct growth of his body as an instrument; secondly, to the earning of his daily bread in an activity that will satisfy the daily needs of his personality; and finally to life in the society he is to enter on leaving school. But secondary education to-day is relevant to few of these things because it is overshadowed by two institutions that loom so large on its horizon that schoolmasters and education committees are

forced to forget the child's needs in obedience to their insistent demands. I refer to the Universities and the examination system, which, in fact, together make one system.

Although little more than ten per cent. of our secondary school population go to the Universities, the secondary curriculum is largely based on its relevance to the academic requirements of Universities to which ninety per cent. of the pupils will not go. Moreover, examinations strangely termed "school leaving" examinations, whose aim, presumably, is to estimate the attainments of a boy or girl on leaving school after a five years' course of secondary training, are confused hopelessly in the mind of the business man with the standard of entrance demanded for a course of advanced academic study at a University. The recent report of the Secondary Schools Examinations Council on the influences surrounding the award of School Certificates adequately and finally deals with this anomaly. The report says: "A 'Matriculation Certificate' is regarded by candidates as a superior kind of certificate. Many employers think of it as better worth having than an ordinary School Certificate and therefore ask for it from their recruits, so it possesses a distinct commercial value. Heads of schools are in consequence pressed by parents to allow pupils to try for matriculation when it is not in the best interests of their education that they should do so." But, in spite of the obvious conclusions to be drawn from this report, schools and schoolmasters are by no means hopeful that their pupils will be freed from the dead hand of a system that prevents them giving to their pupils the education most suited to their needs. When the School Certificate was planned it was agreed that the examination should not decide the curriculum. At the moment it does so decide it, and, in so far as it does so, it weakens the true purpose of secondary education by confining young people's activities to narrow academic channels, taking for granted that a black-coated profession, no matter how humble, is superior to any less clean but more practical vocation.

The School Certificate Examinations of the various examining bodies now have an annual toll of nearly 70,000 adolescents. Because they are the only quantitative means by which educational success can be judged, schools compete with one another over certificates and "exemptions from matriculation." It is easy to condemn them for their refusal to take the higher course of providing an education suited to the needs of the pupil, but they know quite well that any school that refuses to fulfil the demands of the business men of its locality in regard to "matriculation" would be regarded as inefficient; and yet not more than one in four of pupils who "matriculate" go on to a University. Reform is impossible until Universities, and especially London University, the most conservative of them all, make their own arrangements for University entrance, and restrict what examinations they may hold for this purpose to bona fide entrants to the University. We must be clear what qualifications we want a youngster to leave school with; we must know what he is to enter a University with; and we must not assume that the two requirements are the same. In the present confusion of issues few subjects on the secondary curriculum are taught as they might be taught, because the teacher has no freedom; and so the pupil is doped with Shakespeare instead of taught to appreciate him, an inoculation against literary appreciation that may be relied upon to last for most of his active life. He fails to grasp the significance of any subject because he has been too busy learning it, and because its relevance for him has been too much for its examination, and not enough for its intrinsic value.

The business man must share with the Universities the onus of restricting the healthier growth of secondary education. If only he would dispel from his mind the illusion that "matric." is of superior value to a School Certificate he would be releasing promising boys from a burden and would enable them to tackle subjects of more direct value to business life. Courses combining the cultural and practical values of English, modern languages and economics could be organised for the year or two following the School Certificate, and these would be of far greater value to the boys than the stereotyped "subjects" to be passed "at one and the same examination." In fact, the top forms of secondary schools might be made the vehicles of wider, deeper, and more practical education if only the Universities and the business world would recognise their responsibilities. As it is, to use the words of the Report, "many candidates who already hold a School Certificate sit for the examination a second time in order that they may matriculate, when it might have been educationally more profitable for them to pass on to more advanced work." Last year, in the midsummer examination of London University alone, 1,344 candidates sat for the examination for a second or third time in an effort to matriculate. The evil could be stopped by a stroke of the pen; for the business world could not demand what the Universities would not give.

E. B. CASTLE

CACKLE

EVERYBODY is sick, sore and tired of the cackle that has been the accompaniment to the Test Matches in Australia. That, presumably, is why everybody has joined in it. There is nothing more infectious than cackle. We, who are among the most silent and repressed of the animals, incapable of getting rid of our repressions in solitary song as the birds do, jump at every opportunity of communal chatter on any debatable subject whatever. Mr. Lloyd George owes his eminence in politics partly to the fact that, as long ago as the time of the Boer War, he provided his fellow-countrymen with the excitement of chatter. To chatter is to feel alive, and again, during the campaign against the House of Lords, Mr. Lloyd George made a whole nation feel more alive than before by using a few epithets that everybody condemned and everybody was able to talk about. Even to-day, when he is as lonely as an involuntary Achilles in his tent, he can become temporarily as popular as a talkie-star merely by threatening to publish some Cabinet secrets. It is because scenes in the House of Commons make such excellent occasions for chatter that everybody loves them while sincerely professing to be disgusted by them. No words can be too strong to condemn the Member who tried to run away with the Mace, but, at least, he roused to a certain liveliness millions of men and women whom a debate on India would merely have sent to sleep. Are not the vanished Irish Members still spoken of with affectionate regret by the older Parliamentarians, even by those who once denounced them with enpurpled visages? And they are remembered, affectionately, not because of their political wisdom but because of their exceptional capacity for making scenes that led to voluble schoolboy excitement throughout the land. When the great hand-to-hand, or rather hand-to-nose, fight took place during the Home Rule Bill debates every decent man hung his head for shame, feeling that the House of Commons was eternally disgraced. But how, as he hung his head, his heart beat with unholy joy at the prospect of the cackle that was sure to follow! If the Home Rule question had been debated on lines of pure reason, how few Members would ever have sat through a debate! Let someone shout "Judas!" at Mr. Chamberlain, however, and joy was in every breast as every tongue was loosed and men felt themselves part of a drama if only as makers of inarticulate noises in the crowd.

It is always noticeable that, as scenes decrease, the hold of Parliament on the affections of the public decreases. The scenes may be in the large manner of a duel between Gladstone and Disraeli or in the small manner of a giant who is carried out kicking; but in any case there must be a relief from the stagnant atmosphere of pure reason. And it is the same with cricket as with politics. Human beings are easily bored, even by games. They want something to talk about, and a game in which everybody does the expected thing, never taking a risk, and aiming at correctness and security, gives them little to talk about. For some years past cricket has been

languishing because of the growing monotony of the play. Many of the leading players have batted as though the chief object of the game were not to get out. If the spectators had to endure the same asperities of weather at cricket as at football most of the cricket-grounds would be three-quarters empty at county matches. As it is, a green field on a summer's day, with white-clad figures running hither and thither over the grass after a red ball, produces the illusion of a heavenly dream, so that a dull game is better than no game at all. Even so, cricket is increasingly a game for the eyes of aesthetes rather than for the great mass of humanity, who demand something to talk about, and I doubt whether the new generation is attending cricket-matches in the same numbers as did the old. And for those who demand scenes in their games —scenes such as a reckless Jessop once gave them—Test Matches fought to a finish threaten new possibilities of boredom. No longer do the batsmen feel that they must bat with such venturousness as to win the game for their side in three or four days. They feel that even if they stand at the wicket for over after over without scoring a run they are serving their side by wearing down the bowling of their opponents. Conscience bids them stay in rather than hit out, and if they can wear down the bowling they do not mind if they wear down the patience of the spectators as well. Theoretically, of course, a game is played for the sake of the game, not for the sake of the spectators. Hence the erection at enormous cost of stands holding tens of thousands of spectators whose presence is of no importance.

As a game becomes professionalised, however, the theory that nothing need be done to humour the spectator ceases to be valid. If the spectators cease to enjoy cricket it is obvious, for example, that county cricket in England must come to a speedy end, giving place to the village cricket from which it was born. I doubt, indeed, whether the three-day match can survive in modern conditions in any country in which cricket loses its excitement as a spectacle. Test cricket has one advantage over county cricket in its appeal to passions akin to those of war. Patriotism, in its best and worst forms, flushes into life, and men who would otherwise be bored by the play rejoice in the feeling that what bores them may be for the good of their country. I do not mean to suggest that the crowd at a Test Match loses its sense of sportsmanship, or is slow to applaud a fine piece of play by a batsman or fielder whose side it hopes will lose. But partisanship is hot enough to make even comparatively dull play exciting if it seems likely to lead to victory.

Despite this, however, I think even Test cricket will gradually lose its hold on the public unless some means is discovered of encouraging the batsmen to hurry up. I doubt whether the present series of Tests was looked forward to by the ordinary man with the usual excitement till everybody was suddenly set cackling about Bradman. Would Bradman play or would he not? Here was a question that, flashed halfway round the world, was a finer occasion for cackle than the Japanese intervention in Manchuria. No longer did the plain man puzzle his brains with the playtime problem, "How can the pound be worth 13s. 4d. and at the same time be worth as much as it was worth when it was worth a pound?" The Bradman problem raised points in ethics and sportsmanship about which he could talk to his neighbour without feeling entirely at sea. Then came the magnificent outburst of cackle when a number of former Australian players supported by a number of Australian pressmen protested in violent terms against the leg-trap theory of bowling. The argument waxed as warm as a seventeenth-century argument about theology. Was the leg-trap theory unfair? Was it the beginning of the end of cricket? Once more the confused din of cackle filled the air, and cricket became as interesting as it had ever been. Everybody was thoroughly disgusted—disgusted with the rot about Bradman and disgusted with what was described as the "squealing" about the leg-trap theory—and everybody enjoyed saying how disgusting it all was. Cricket had got exactly the advertisement it needed, and Bradman and the leg-trap had provided the equivalent of scenes to make up for any lack of scenes on the field of play.

It must be admitted that at Melbourne even the play provided scenes. But no one expected it to do so, and we cannot be sure that such scenes will recur for another century. Cackle, however, can always be depended on, and cricket badly needs it. Great personalities, no doubt, are of more importance to the game, but, till the great personalities begin to hit out, let every lover of cricket do all in his power to encourage cackle as a means of keeping life in it. Y. Y.

CONSCIENCE IN CONTRACTS

Canadian opinion is sharply divided as to the morality of bartering surplus cattle, at high prices, for Soviet oil and anthracite.

How easy our shopping used to be
In the bad old days when our trade was free;
When we chose our boots by the simple test
Of what would fit us and suit us best;
When our orders for jams and fruit were placed
With sole regard to our private taste;
And we never bothered if X or Y
Was the firm from whom it was *right* to buy!
To-day we know that the course of trade
Should turn, not only on bargains made
But on public int'rests and private quarrels
And the view we take of the seller's morals.
Take my own case—there's a grocer's store
Just round the corner, almost next door,
Which stocks the brands that I favour most
At slightly under the normal cost.
But alas! the grocer's too fond of wine,
His views on politics are not mine,
And his private life, so they tell me, shocks
The well-behaved and the orthodox.
Can I buy from him, when I read each day
The bitter things that our patriots say
Of the folk who purchase Red Russian wood,
Because, forsooth, it is cheap and good?
Yet I own 'tis hard, for it pleased his whim
To promise, if I would deal with him,
To purchase freely (and pay me well)
The goods *I* find it so hard to sell;
So I can't but wish it were still agreed
That trade depended on mutual need,
And I sympathise with the awkward case
That our friends in Canada have to face.

MACFLECKNOE

Correspondence

MR. KEYNES' PROPOSALS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

SIR,—May I respond to Mr. Keynes' appeal for an indication of any group of remedies for the financial tension not mentioned in his analysis of the problem before the World Economic Conference?

Can we not make international capital out of the present low level of short-term rates of interest, by borrowing from hand to mouth and repaying our long-term creditors each in his own coin? For instance, the nations might agree each to borrow in its own short-term market, for the maintenance of its exchanges and for the purchase of long-term debt paying interest at rates fixed in terms of its own currency, until the rise of short-term rates and the fall of long-term rates made it unprofitable to continue. They could agree at the same time to meet any tendency of speculation to raise short-term rates farther by increased taxation, if necessary.

6 Court Downs Road, A. C. DOBBS
Beckenham.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

SIR,—I was extremely interested to read Mr. J. M. Keynes' article on the World Economic Conference, 1933, in your issue of December 24th, as his fourth plan is one which I have heard discussed many times. The difficulty, however, appears to be in its operation, and in particular in arriving at a formula to fix the "economic weight" which would be acceptable to all countries. If this could be done there should be no insurmountable difficulties in arranging for the distribution of the new international issue, for, as Mr. Keynes suggests, this could be done in various ways.

Could Mr. Keynes carry his proposal a step farther by suggesting how this formula could be reached? JOS. T. MORRIS

227 Tooley Street, S.E.1.

PAYING IN KIND

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

SIR,—Although only a casual reader of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, and that recently, I venture to inquire what is the real difficulty of settling our debts with the U.S.A. by means of a territorial transfer, such as, say, the Bahama Islands. Is it a question of prestige or another silly convention which, whilst condoning wholesale slaughter, boggles at the idea of transferring a few thousand specimens of *homo sapiens* from one Government to another?

So far as England and America are concerned, there should be many areas where the wishes of the population might not arise at all, or, if they did, could be overcome. As to the danger factor in time of war: of what use are the peace pacts, etc., if this war element is to be the sole deciding one?

I may be a very stupid retired Major, but I believe if provision could be made for a return of Germany's mandated Colonies, such would go a long way towards smoothing out many difficulties.

Burton Hill, R. G.

Malmesbury.

THE ALIEN MENACE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

SIR,—The above is the title of a book by Lieut.-Col. A. H. Lane, with a Foreword by Lord Sydenham of Combe. In a circular inviting me to purchase it, the publishers say: "This Book tells the truth—the real truth—as to what is behind most of our troubles in the British Isles and Empire. The author proves conclusively that the political unrest, unemployment, disease and immorality in our midst spring largely from foreign sources." Under "Contents" I find the headings of XIX chapters. The second reads as follows:—"Number of Aliens in the British Isles and How They Get Here." Has it ever occurred to Lord Sydenham and Colonel Lane to ask themselves what would happen to British subjects all over the world were foreign Governments to treat us as these gentlemen seem to think we ought to treat foreigners coming here?

I wonder if anyone has ever compiled a summary of the notable positions which have been occupied during the centuries by British subjects in foreign countries, and of the Arts and Crafts introduced by foreigners into Britain? For instance, by the Huguenots on their expulsion from France? Some sixty years ago I read two ponderous volumes in which Hill Burton told the fascinating story of *The Scot Abroad*. If no such book already exists for both England and Scotland, I venture to suggest that the compilation of one—*up to date*—offers a splendid field. I cannot think of any Christmas present which would be more acceptable a year hence to those who believe that the aspirations and efforts of the League of Nations are not merely "sound and fury, signifying nothing." D. M. STEVENSON

Glasgow.

SCOTTISH HOME RULE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

SIR,—Mr. Cecil Weir writes in your issue of December 10th, "It would be a pity if English public opinion were to imagine that there was any substantial demand in Scotland for Home Rule."

My personal feeling is that Mr. Weir is more wrong than right, but the demand for Home Rule cannot yet be assessed. The columns of the Scottish press and, recently, of the *Times*, do, however, bear ample witness to the demand that exists all over this country for a level-headed inquiry into the present administration of Scottish affairs; and the demand for Home Rule has, at any rate, been such that it has driven Mr. Weir and his business friends in Glasgow, including Lord Maclay, to agitate corporately against the project with some vehemence. Your readers are the best judges of whether a number of the ordinary type of business men (if they can visualise them for a moment) are likely to act corporately in this manner if the object of their protest were as negligible as Mr. Weir tries to prove.

The real truth is (as I know from conversation with signatories of the Anti-Home Rule Manifesto) that these business gentlemen fear the splitting of the anti-Socialist vote through the intervention of Home Rule candidates. They, and subsequently the Tories at their annual conference in Glasgow, have therefore tried to "steam roller" Home Rule discussion into silence by firmly denying the existence of the demand for it. One must confess that they spend an extraordinary amount of time denouncing something which, according to their assertions, hardly exists. Whatever Mr. Weir may say, it is more honest to face the fact that the Home Rule movement exists, and that it is rapidly increasing, and that the ridicule and distrust with which the anti-Home Rule agitation was received by an influential part of even the Tory press here after the first meeting of the business men at the Glasgow Merchant House on November 14th is some indication of the extent to which the ordinary Scotsman respects the opinions of these brave North Britons.

In assessing the value of this "business" condemnation of Scottish self-government it is necessary to remember also that it is the business men of Scotland who, having taken part extensively in the process of "rationalisation," have materially assisted the tendency for industry to drift southward, thus creating unemployment in Scotland. When industry drifts from the North of England to the South, it still remains in England; but when industry drifts out of Scotland there is nothing to take its place, and the subsequent situation is much more serious for Scotland than business men or Conservatives like Sir Robert Horne will admit.

Mr. Weir states that to confine the powers of a parliament within definite limits is an "untenable proposition"; I cannot see why this is so—the very existence all over the world of a number of Federal States governed by federal and subsidiary parliaments seems to refute Mr. Weir's assertion. If a parliament is established in Scotland to deal with definite Scottish business, say education, health and housing, transport, and agriculture and fisheries, it will deal with that business and with no other. How would such a parliament interfere with the profitable flow of Scottish trade, and in any case why should it want to? After all, one of the chief objects in establishing a Scottish parliament with short sessions would be to place the control of Scottish affairs in the hands of persons in closer touch with our industry than just those who can spare the time to be away from Scotland for half the year in London.

As Mr. Weir points out, it is possible that the Scots government might at times differ in political colour from the English government, but if the Scots government is to deal only with domestic issues what harm should this political difference do to business interests in either country? As a believer in democracy Mr. Weir will surely not approve of the conversion of a Scottish Liberal or Socialist majority, say, into a working Tory majority at Westminster by the addition of several hundreds of Tory M.P.s elected for English divisions? Bureaucracy should be under, and not over, Parliament, yet the anti-Home Rulers are asking for the further separation of Scottish from English bureaucracies, without apparently realising that an increased Scottish bureaucracy in Edinburgh will be without specific Scottish parliamentary control. National administration departments surely require the guidance and control of nationally grouped representatives, particularly as regards expenditure.

If Mr. Weir and his business colleagues really believe that it is wrong for Scottish opinion to control Scottish administration in every respect and finally, let them say so honestly and without qualification. R.

Edinburgh.

[This letter has been unavoidably held over.—ED. *N. S. & N.*]

THE SCUM AND SLUM PROBLEM

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

SIR,—It is difficult to treat Mr. Patient's explosion in your last week's issue quite seriously; but as the majority of the persons he alludes to in such refined language are not in a position to speak for themselves we must speak for them.

It seems that it is necessary to repeat the truth that there are slum-makers and potential slum-makers, everywhere—even in the neighbourhood of Alderney Street, S.W.1, but as some of them have servants to clear up for them their sins are not made public. No group of people and no geographical area has a monopoly of cleanliness and order and pride in house-keeping—but it has been our experience that some of the "middle-class" tenants on our estates are the most slovenly, and many of the poorest families maintain a standard of cleanliness which in the circumstances passes belief.

Mr. Patient ignores the fact that the sanitary inspector has power to serve notices on dirty tenants as well as on neglectful landlords.

IRENE T. BARCLAY and
EVELYN E. PERRY
Joint Hon Secs. St. Pancras House Improvement Society, Ltd.
96 Seymour Street, N.W.1

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

SIR,—As a citizen interested in the housing question, together with its social aspects, I cannot pass the letter of C. T. Patient without protest. He states: "Slums are created by the scum who occupy these houses. . . ." Do the so-called scum crowd these houses together back to back without gardens; with semi-underground rooms; bad lighting; no bathrooms and little convenience? It seems to me that these conditions, which are the real cause of slums, are created by builders. I deny emphatically that the L.C.C. estates are being fouled. It is my experience that the overwhelming majority of the people who have moved from poor neighbourhoods to these estates have developed pride and care in their houses and surroundings. One does not expect the New Jerusalem in five minutes, but there is, I submit, sufficient evidence to point to the tremendous moral uplift to people removed from slum areas. This surely suggests that slums create scum, to use Mr. Patient's obnoxious word. As to solving the housing question by increasing the number of owner occupiers, perhaps Mr. Patient will suggest the method by which everyone can be assured of the regular incomes which are essential for the purchase of houses through Building Societies, etc. J. H. BENNETT

Selsdon, Surrey.

THE NEW REVIVALISM

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

SIR,—I have to thank Mr. Chaning Pearce for his interesting comments on my letter.

Does he remember the scene in *Father and Son*, when Mrs. Brown's invitation and her Christmas party were "laid before the Lord" by that rather unequal pair, and Mr. Gosse's "reaction" when the youngster on rising from his knees piped up "He says I may go to the Brown's"? No one who reads the book can doubt for a moment Mr. Gosse's consistent and lifelong submission to what his faith terms "guidance"; most of all perhaps in every phase of the education of his son. Would your correspondent maintain that it was always received?

The alternative to so mechanical a theory of inspiration is not, as he suggests, the mere "following of human opinion," but a growth, often imperceptible from stage to stage, in the knowledge of spiritual, as of material, things through certain categories of human experience, among which I would include humility, docility, trial, error, perseverance, responsibility. Such categories, in the social fields of their application, do not ignore, for those who believe in His existence, God's self-revelation: rather it is at every stage presupposed. Even the Rev. G. F. Allen, in his beautiful little book *He That Cometh* (as different, be it observed, from *For Sinners Only* as cheese from chalk), confronts us with the same dilemma, which I submit is a quite unreal one. It leads him to brand those whose experience of forgiveness and of ever-renewed impulses towards Christian faith and service come to them by different channels from his as Pharisees; including in this condemnation the whole of his own life previous to the illumination he so rightly prizes. (Is the seed, then, and the earth which nourished it, of less importance to the harvest than the later flowering, and the fruit?) However sacred the experience which *originates* such teaching, its *result* is without question the promulgation among disciples of our old friend Infallibility—though I know this term is never in practice employed. And where infallibility under whatever disguise is preached, there (I maintain) is superstition. (By the way, is an expression of surprise and regret at such effect of influence by accredited teachers, and of alarm at its possibilities, justified to the full by past religious history, fairly described as "unsubstantiated abuse"?) No one who listens, as I have often had the privilege of doing, to the enthusiasm of neophytes can be under any illusion as to the actuality, and not the contingency merely, of this danger. Surely in this, as in all other matters whose reference is both divine and human, the real battle is against sameness. Why should we be asked to fight it all over again? It would be interesting to know how far members of the Society of Friends, whose doctrine of the "inner light" has affinities with that of Mr. Gosse and the groups, would accept their conclusions.

With regard to financial organisation, I had not anything so recondite in view as the secret society. We need not look so far for an analogy. There may be no "fund"; I have reason to believe appeals for money are made, and it would appear to be spent without stint.

I was not aware, certainly, until informed by your correspondent that the groups circled the globe for the purpose of obtaining readier access to the hotel-population, i.e., the rich, in the various countries visited. A harsh if obvious comment on this procedure was embodied in your original article. I will ask only, is it sufficiently close to the spirit and letter of New Testament teaching to be an altogether sound one for Christians?

BARBARA E. GWYER

Miscellany

THE FLOWERING REED

WHEN the red brands of day consume
And in the darkening Rhône illume
The still reflections of the reed,
I saw its passing leagues of gloom,
Torrential in their strength and speed,
Resisted by a silver plume
That burned far down among the weed—
As in the dark of Tullia's tomb
The frail wick-tethered phantom set
To watch, remember, and regret,
Thawing faint tears to feed its fume
Of incense, spent in one long sigh
The centuries that thundered by
To battle, scooping huge moraines
Across the wreck of fifty reigns—
It held a candle to the eye
To show how much must pass and die
To set such scatheless phantoms free
Or feather with one reed of rhyme
The boulder-rolling Rhône of time
That rafts our ruin to the sea.

ROY CAMPBELL

FOPS' CORNER

PLAIN facts are sometimes difficult to reconcile. It is a remarkable circumstance that the century which began with Shakespeare and ended with Congreve, and gave us practically all that is greatest in our drama, should have been the century when concentration at the play was most difficult and least practised. Many generations passed before the English (or, indeed, any) audience could discipline itself into quietude for the common good. How fine thoughts finely expressed could have been properly savoured amidst hurly-burly is incomprehensible, unless we are prepared to assume that our forbears were devoid of nerves and capable of ignoring distractions. Insensitive they certainly were not: their emotions lay on the surface. It was precisely because the natural man was granted free play that noise abounded.

Given a standing pit, and, let the country be what it may, you are bound to have a noisy audience. To the theatrical antiquary that has long been a truism. In the common theatres of what is broadly known as the Elizabethan period, the groundlings jostling each other in the open yard were seldom

in a state of perfect quietude. A contemporary writer, describing the aspect from above, dwells upon the perpetual motion :

> The very floor, as 'twere, waves to and fro,
> And, like a floating island, seems to move
> Upon a sea bound in with shores above.

It might have been thought that with the banishment of the groundling at the Restoration peace would have begun to reign in the theatre, but, so far from the seated pit bringing any amelioration, for the one devil that was cast out pretty nearly seven rushed in to fill the vacancy. The Restoration theatre was a theatre of the classes rather than the masses, but it lost no time in demonstrating that the great unwashed had no monopoly of riot and disorder. Brawls in the pit were of common occurrence between drunken gallants : there was much flashing of swords and screaming of frightened women in the boxes. Nor was this the worst. There was no booking of seats in those days, and, very shortly, it grew to be customary for ladies who desired to secure good places to send their servants to the playhouse to take bodily possession of the best that could be had. Once the real owners arrived the flunkeys betook themselves to the vestibule, there to remain until the time came to wait upon their mistresses home. Meanwhile they indulged in their own amusement, often quarrelling among themselves like their betters, and generally contriving to create a perpetual racket whose reverberations rang with painful clarity through the auditorium. It was of them Dryden wrote in an epilogue delivered in 1682 :

> They've grown a nuisance, beyond all disasters,
> We've none so great—but their unpaying masters.

As if all this were not bad enough, the witlings of the time inconsiderately contributed their own quota to the general disturbance. Fops' Corner, both the institution and its designation, was completely symbolic of the temper of the times. It signified a particular angle in the pit close to the stage where the beaux assembled and daily acted a farce of their own improvising. In vain did the dramatists of the hour rail in good round set terms against the play within the play. Nothing short of a special visitation of Providence could have annihilated this silly institution. But circumstances occasionally conspired to bring about some mitigation of the nuisance. When Dryden's *Marriage à la Mode* was produced at the Duke's Theatre in the Easter of 1672, the epilogue gave thanks for small mercies, due to the fact that most of the gallants about town had flocked to sea on the declaration of war with the Dutch :

> Lord, how reform'd and quiet are we grown,
> Since all our braves and all our wits are gone.
> Fop Corner now is free from civil war,
> White Wig and Vizard masks no longer jar.
> France and the Fleet hath swept the Town so clear,
> That we can act in peace, and you can hear.

But the quietude gained by sheer loss of patrons was by no means desirable, and it was with a sigh of relief that the players welcomed back the old noise-makers. Even Dryden came in time to philosophise over the situation. His epilogue, written to be spoken at new Drury Lane on its opening day in March, 1674, concludes resignedly with

> So may Fop Corner full of noise remain,
> And drive far off the dull attentive train.

Four years later one finds Goodville, in Otway's comedy, *Friendship in Fashion*, promising an aspiring woman of the town that she shall keep her coach and six, " and every morning swoop the Exchange in triumph, and after noon at the theatre, exalted in a box, give audience to ev'ry trim, amorous twirling fop of the Corner that comes thither to make a noise, hear no play, and show himself."

Afterwards, Fops' Corner came to be looked upon as a necessary evil, the sort of thing sensible people eloquently comment upon with a shrug of the shoulders, and references to it cease. About the last mention of the unsavoury meeting-place to be found before the end of the century occurs in Radcliffe's " anti-heroick poem " of " The Ramble," which fell from the press in 1682 :

> Then it began to visit playes,
> And on the women it would gaze,
> And looked like Love in a Maze
> Or a Wood.
> Into Fop Corner it would get,
> And use a strange obstreperous wit,
> Not any quiet to the Pit
> Allowing.

A foolish custom will often persist : we need not be surprised at the longevity of Fops' Corner. Treated as a matter of course and with silent contempt, the old ridiculous sociologico-theatrical institution lingered so long that it is impossible now to say when it ended. All we know for certain is that it had an existence of something over half a century. Our last trace of it is in a pleasant essay on " Audiences," in a book of diversified pleasings called *The Touchstone*, written by James Ralph of *Dunciad* memory and published in 1728. Therein it is given brevet honours, since it is quaintly styled Wits' Corner.

W. J. LAWRENCE

HANDEL AND ELGAR

THE recent Elgar festival given by the B.B.C. was the occasion of a performance of his oratorio, *The Kingdom*, Op. 51, which was composed about the year 1906, when it was first performed at Birmingham. It is not often that one has a chance of hearing this work, and it was particularly instructive on this occasion, since its performance at the Queen's Hall on Wednesday, December 14th, by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, the B.B.C. Chorus and the Wireless Ladies' Chorus under Dr. Adrian Boult was followed two nights later by a performance of the *Messiah*, with the Philharmonic Choir and the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Thomas Beecham.

There is a good diversity of opinion about Sir Edward Elgar's music. There are few who, with Mr. Bernard Shaw, think him the greatest symphonist since Beethoven, but even those, like myself, who consider his two symphonies to be among the weakest of his works, are glad to hear that Sir Edward has written a third symphony which we may hear this year. The academic world has been inclined to look askance at Elgar because he did not go through any of our official schools of music, but learned to compose in the more haphazard style of natural musicians. Then there are the enthusiastic patriots who pretend that Elgar is the quintessence of England and his music " English " music—perhaps the first English music since Purcell. No doubt Elgar is the most gifted composer we have had in this country since Purcell, but in many respects he is far from being typically English in character and outlook, whilst the actual idiom of his music derives so directly from German music of the nineteenth century, from Wagner and Brahms, that I cannot understand what some musicians mean when they talk about the " Englishness " of the violin concerto, for example. I cannot see how this concerto is more in the blood of Albert Sammons than of Yehudi Menuhin or vice versa. It seems to me neither Jewish nor Christian music, and yet I think it would be possible to find more points in common in the violin concertos of Max Bruch and Elgar than we should ever find in the music of Vaughan Williams and Elgar.

To me *The Kingdom* has something of the atmosphere of *Parsifal* ; but—to continue our doubtful nationalistic distinctions—it is *Parsifal* written by a gentleman. It is doubtful whether any German can be a gentleman, because the Germans have themselves declared that under the rank of baron they don't exist ; but there can be no doubt that *The Kingdom* is the work of a gentleman, and I mean this as a serious compliment. The text of *The Kingdom* is biblical and has its source in the New Testament. The text is very dexterously and tactfully put together, and describes the Pentecost and other incidents of the early Christian Church. Unlike *The Dream of Gerontius*, which is definitely Catholic, *The Kingdom* has no sectarian bias but is broadly Christian. Nevertheless, the music has the same definite flavour of what I hope I may call, without offence, erotic religiosity as *Gerontius*, though more

temperately and discreetly expressed. I find it hard to define this particular kind of religious sentiment without seeming to decry it. In order not to do this I will choose the best example of it I know, which is in some of the poetry of Coventry Patmore. Patmore was also a Catholic, and there are many other points of resemblance between these two artists who are in some ways so very English and so extremely un-English. The music of *The Kingdom* is a rich haze of a particular kind of religious sentiment. I have an enormous admiration for Patmore as a poet, and to rank Elgar as an artist with Patmore is to give him high praise indeed. The religious sentiment they both share may be illustrated by two lines out of Section II of *The Kingdom*, described as " At the Beautiful Gate." You may distinguish infallibly two main types of English religious feeling by using these words " At the Beautiful Gate " and the following lines :

> This man lame from his mother's womb
> is carried daily to the Beautiful Gate

as a touchstone. Those who like this phrase " At the Beautiful Gate " are of the religious type of Elgar, Patmore, Alice Meynell, Francis Thompson and a large band of thoroughly English artists and mystics going right back through our history. Those who dislike this phrase intensely belong to the other religious type, the type of Milton, Blake, Cromwell, and Shelley.

As I think Patmore a far finer poet than Swinburne, and one of the few real poets of the last hundred years, I hope I may not be misunderstood when I say that *The Kingdom* is as un-English as the *Messiah* is English. In the *Messiah* I always seem to hear the authentic voice of my own country, although it was composed by a German. But I don't think this has much to do with any religious standpoint. It is rather a matter of genius, and yet when one says that *The Kingdom* is a work of great talent and the *Messiah* a work of genius, one does not say all that needs to be said. We have no right to say that the voice of Milton is the voice of England, and that the voice of George Herbert or Patmore is not the voice of England. And the complexity of the matter is made startling by the fact of the *Messiah* being composed by a German, and being from beginning to end as utterly English and non-German as our imaginations can conceive.

I should like to be able to go on to the conclusion that irresistibly thrusts itself forward, namely, that all genius is English. There is a sense in which I really believe this to be true, and to me there is something foreign about the music of Elgar and the poetry of Patmore which I also recognise in the music of Brahms and Wagner. All these artists are in some sense alien. But Beethoven, Haydn, Schubert, Handel and Mozart are not alien : they are English—as English as Job, Jeremiah, Isaiah and Abraham. Now that I have mentioned these ancient Hebrews, we can see more clearly where our English affinity lies. It lies in the religious purity of monotheism. The *Messiah* is monotheistic, *The Kingdom* is not. The *Messiah* is passionate, *The Kingdom* is sensual. The *Messiah* is thrilling, sublime, and radiant. *The Kingdom*, like *Parsifal*—only, I repeat, it is the work of a gentleman—is dim, rich, warm, languorous and enervating.

Naturally, if any German likes to say that the quality I call English he calls German and cites Luther, not to mention the great composers I have named, I have no quarrel with him. But I might point out that it will be more difficult for him to lay claim to the great Old Testament Jews as being German. There is no doubt at all that they are entirely English. Not all Jews are English. Schnabel is English, but the Jews you will find in the Regent Palace Hotel are not English. Saint Paul was English, but I am not at all sure about Jesus. That is why I, as an Englishman, am reluctant to describe myself as a Christian. I am a member of the Church of England and not a Christian. But Coventry Patmore was a Christian, so is the composer of *The Kingdom*, and therefore not, in my opinion, wholly and most characteristically English like Handel, Abraham, Moses, and St. Paul.

W. J. TURNER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

A Proper Conquest

The best description of Mr. Harcourt Williams's production of *She Stoops to Conquer*, at The Old Vic, is one of the lines of the play : it has the right " Gothic vivacity." Mr. Williams and his actors have invented a wealth of " business " as rich and varied and full of country humours as are the carvings of misericords and corbels ; and the actors' vivacity was so infectious that the audience could hardly be persuaded to leave, and obviously wanted it all over again. Mr. Malcolm Keen made Mr. Hardcastle the kindly, handsome, hospitable gentleman that he should be, leaving the comic emphasis to Miss Clare Harris's richly vulgar Mrs. Hardcastle. We could well believe that the delicious mixture of common sense and high spirits of Miss Ashcroft's Kate made that dainty creature the apple of her father's eye. Mr. Roger Livesey gave an interesting rendering of Tony Lumpkin. In this slender guise Tony seemed not so much the usual loutish bumpkin as a country sprite of mischief ; there was delicacy and speed in his " obstropolous manner " and he led us on his " circumbendibus " with the intelligent malice of Puck. Miss Valerie Tudor was charming as Miss Neville ; and the overacting of Mr. Charles Hickman as Young Marlow and of Mr. William Fox as Hastings was just right and made them richly entertaining, and not the rather boring interludes that they too often become. No one who enjoys good acting, generous team work, and intelligent production should miss this most successful holiday revel at the Old Vic.

The Art of Doing In

Mr. Anthony Armstrong, in *Ten Minute Alibi* at the Embassy Theatre, contrives murder admirably. The audience is permitted for once to see the crime actually committed and is only asked to wonder whether or not the alibi will hold. It is agreeable to be certain that the victim thoroughly deserved his death. A flashy man actively engaged in the white slave trade, he was not deserving of our sympathy. As to the slayer, he was not merely the epitome of ingeniousness, he was also a just man. The deed was done to save Betty from a fate worse than death. Surprise is maintained until the end. Miss Celia Johnson, Mr. Robert Douglas, and Mr. Anthony Ireland were all excellent. Nor must we forget Mr. John Garside, who as a Conservative was not suspected of the crime.

Some Idiots Among the Fruit-gatherers

The Blonde Captive (at the Dominion) is one of those Hollywood productions calculated to make angels and other filmgoers weep. Some quite unintelligent and uninstructed persons collected a lot of money and started off to Northern Australia to photograph the relics of " Neanderthal man, 50,000 years old." The result is what might be expected, some extremely interesting photographs of the most primitive human inhabitants of our planet, taken by persons who had no idea what was interesting in itself and who lacked the rudiments of anthropological training. With a little intelligence this could have been a fascinating instead of an exasperating film. These are perhaps the first cinematographic records of the Australian fruit-gatherers, and as such many persons will be curious to see them. When will film producers try to get suitable people to do their work for them ?

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, January 6th—
" Dinner at Eight," Palace Theatre.

SATURDAY, January 7th—
Robert Mayer Concert for Children, Central Hall, Westminster, 11.
Rugby Football, England *v.* The Rest, Twickenham.
Commemorative Exhibition of British Art, Burlington House.

SUNDAY, January 8th—
Mrs. M. A. Hamilton on " The Challenge of the U.S.A.," Conway Hall, 11.
S. K. Ratcliffe, " Fifty Years of Social Change," Conway Hall, 3.15.
Dr. Pryns Hopkins on " Can Russia Regenerate the World," Hampstead Ethical Society, 158a Mill Lane, N.W., 6.15.

MONDAY, January 9th—
" Eager Heart," Sadler's Wells, 3.30 and 8.30.
Anti-war Meeting, Memorial Hall, 7.30.

TUESDAY, January 10th—
Leonard Matters on " What I Saw in India," Friends House, Euston Road, 1.20.

WEDNESDAY, January 11th—
" Things that are Cæsar's," Arts Theatre.

THURSDAY, January 12th—" Double Harness," Haymarket Theatre.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

IT is perhaps as well for a writer whose name is appearing for the first time at the foot of this page to begin by reminding both his readers and himself that literary criticism can be looked on not only as the classification of books by reviewers but the classification of reviewers by books. Brer Rabbit, when he goaded himself to assault the silent and impenetrable figure of Tar-Baby, was a most typical reviewer. He failed to understand, asked questions vainly, grew enraged and in the resultant mix-up it was his fur that flew and his character that suffered whilst Tar-Baby remained as aloof, inscrutable and beautiful as ever. Without having intended it, or even being aware of it, he had told us everything there is to know about poor Bunny's brains. Such information is almost always to the disadvantage of the critic, since it is the habit for books to make, out of what is said about them, whatever is true seem obvious and whatever is untrue seem imbecile. For example, I am quite sure nobody has ever injured the characters and reputations of many of my dearest friends in my eyes so much as some of the greatest authors have done merely by not having written to their taste. And similarly I have noticed that love and affection and respect have been inexplicably withdrawn from me on account of some preposterous, worthless, obfuscated trash which I could not force myself to read. I have even been treated with brutal contempt on account of my liking a book extremely when nothing would do but for me to love it extravagantly.

It is not the semi-divine authors, or even the very great authors, who serve best as touchstones with which to test the gold in our friends: the bad writers do just as well, and most valuable of all are the oddities and the extremists.

Just as the motoring correspondent of the *Times* tries out every new car on Dashwood Hill and gives figures of performance on that, so we may all select out of our bookcases a private cabinet of reagents with which to test and analyse each other and our friends.

In judging the results a good deal of allowance has to be made for age and sex.

Thus while it is undoubtedly a good sign in the young not to be interested in the work of any living writers, it is a very bad sign in the old. Indeed any old gentleman, of seventy or over, who does not grossly over-rate the work of at least one writer under thirty is, to my thinking, in a very dangerous condition.

* * *

Almost all works of imagination, be they poems, plays, stories or novels, may on occasion serve as the standards behind which we elect to queue up, and when one has taken one's place in the line it is difficult to say whether it is more painful to see an old friend ostentatiously pass one by without a word, or to recognise an old enemy, with whom one has never before had a taste in common, as one's neighbour. The poor fellow to whom both these disasters happen at once may well inspire our commiseration, but if he carries through the formidable task of forgiving his friend for the wounds which his indifference has inflicted and readjusting his conceptions of a lifelong foe, we may respect him as a strangely honest man, with the courage to be a martyr for the sake of art.

It is much more common, of course, for him to realise at once that he has got into the wrong company and to hurry away from the queue. If you have once watched him doing this you will never be able to be seriously interested in any of his opinions about books again. This is, obviously, very unjust, as there are few people who have never been taken in by a bad book and been argued out of the mistake by a friend.

* * *

A good book, a bad book? The question is hardly ever as simple as that, yet it is as impossible for us to avoid these crude words as it is for a photographer to avoid rendering a red rose with green leaves in the same colourless way as that rarer phenomenon, the green-petalled cabbage rose nestling among its scarlet foliage.

It is not we who are colour blind—only the forms of words in which we are bound to express ourselves all have to run in that drab gradation of best, better, good, bad, worse and worst. And so everything we can say of works of art involves this sickening repetition of good and bad, words which we have learned better than to apply to human beings when we really know anything about them.

* * *

It is not sufficient to know that a critic has rushed up in support of a book, or has queued up behind it; one must distinguish between different kinds of allegiance, and the most important distinction that we all make, *for us ourselves*, is between the sort of book which takes one outside oneself and the sort which satisfies an inner desire. I have often felt, as I read it, that a book of this second class was disentangling and liberating my very soul while my cramped and moth-eaten intelligence soared on adventitious wings into the empyrean, etcetera. And the most delightful thing about it was that it only seemed to be saying in a better way what I had in myself to say. The full implication of the words "better way" did not strike me, and I believed that the book did not change me in the least but only revealed to me my own unexpected latent powers.

It is a very different matter when one is reading a book of the first class, for that is indeed an experience and adventure. One finds oneself suddenly having shipped on a dark night on board an unknown vessel, bound God knows where. There is the sound of the creak of the cordage, the hum of the wind, and there is also the uneasy motion of the waves. There is nothing reassuring in sight. Lonely and with his heart full of fear the reader has set out on a voyage which may profoundly alter his outlook and his character. And the worst thing is that he is made to doubt the worth of everything in himself, his depths seem shallow, his courage ignorance. Yet he is running into these dangers willingly, an eager volunteer.

No man reads many books like that in a lifetime, if only because the influence of one such book may be so great as to make the full effect of another impossible. Yet without speaking of these extreme instances we can all recognise the existence of each of these two classes, and I have laid stress on them here because it is usually possible to tell in which of them a book has been for the critic.

* * *

Naturally the division is entirely a personal one, valid for one man alone. The skylark song of your heart may be the dark voyage of fear for me. This does happen sometimes, but it is very rare when a great book is in question. For most people, I believe, agree with me in the comfortable opinion that the greatest poets and writers are, incredible though the fact appears, saying in their individual ways what we feel that we have always been almost on the point of saying ourselves.

"How true! How often I felt just that!" gulps the schoolgirl reading Lear, and we are all in her position.

But if writers often produce that illusion they, particularly when they are prophets, can do the exact opposite, transforming familiar platitudes into new worlds of truth at the sight of which we tremble. But whatever the explanation of these miracles the critic must beware of that temptation which would keep him sitting snugly in the company of the great and lesser writers to whom he feels most akin. He must be ready to follow strange voices into the night—in short, he must be alive to every sort and kind of writer; and though he may never succeed in throwing a single ray of light on anyone of them, he will at all events have lighted up and made visible his own mind, or lack of it, by their light, and will have got himself accurately classified by the great and small and rainbow-tinted writers of the world.

MERCURY PATTEN

A PROFESSIONAL SON

Herbert Gladstone. A Memoir. By SIR CHARLES MALLET. Hutchinson. 18s.

Sir Charles Mallet has written a delightful account of a delightful man, who was himself content to be thought of as a professional son, and who succeeded in getting other people to take him at his own over-modest valuation. Those who said that nobody would have ever heard of Herbert Gladstone had he not been the son of his father probably argued correctly, as he was completely lacking in ambition and the desire to trample on his fellow-men. He could have passed a very happy life between the golf-course and the music room. On the other hand, the fact of his sonship, when it had once driven him into public life, gave him an ideal of conduct up to which he strove to live and a sense of responsibility for public decency. There was always something of the high-spirited and generous boy about Herbert.

Brought up under the shadow of a benevolent Upas-tree, Herbert certainly never withered, but perhaps he did not quite grow to his full height. Space was always rather cramped in Hawarden Park. Not that Mr. Gladstone was a severe parent. On the contrary, the children grew up as savages. "Papa must not be worried," was the family slogan. And when the great man emerged from the Temple of Peace, it was only to play pick-a-back for ten minutes before retiring again into forbidden territory. On only one great moral precept was much insistence laid—the all-importance of truthfulness, and Herbert was to grow up the most straightforward of men. A very unfortunate private school was chosen for the boy, where, in an atmosphere of anarchy tempered by thrashing, he turned into a "little fiend." It must have been a truly shocking school to turn Herbert, even temporarily, into a "fiend."

Eton did not fulfil the hopes of Hawarden. Herbert was as lazy a youngster as ever whiled away six years in those too luscious meadows, and he only got into Sixth Form by prolonged residence. At Oxford, however, he turned over a new leaf and read history for seven hours a day. Characteristically he succeeded in persuading himself and everybody else, that he had probably failed in his tripos altogether; so that when he actually got a first, astonishment was almost indecently expressed. The examiners said, and we can well believe them, that they had never read more "pleasant" papers. Strange to say, this most undonnish man became a don. Deserting University for Keble, he tried without much success to induce the rising clerical generation to get thirds instead of fourths. He was universally liked. But he could never have been permanently happy as a don. It was as well that when Mr. Gladstone, on becoming member for Midlothian, vacated his seat for Leeds, Herbert unexpectedly found himself member for the city. He was never to lose his seat between 1880 and 1911, when he went to South Africa.

Those who search for small details about Mr. Gladstone will not be disappointed in this book. "His ten points on household economy," drawn up for his Eton son, is a model of what may be termed idealistic worldly wisdom, and it comes as a slight shock to remark that all this pother is being made about 10s. a term, rising terminally by 1s. Tips from elder brothers, however, mitigated the severity of Herbert's lot, while Mrs. Gladstone appears to suggest that the whole affair was great nonsense. "*Never*," she writes, "be afraid of asking me for money. There is nothing I have such a horror of as not having any." Who would not be economist on these terms? It is to be feared that Mrs. Gladstone was a confirmed inflationist.

Sir Charles Mallet takes us again through the last thirty years of the Liberal Party. As usual "C.B.'s" stock rises a few points more, and Mr. Lloyd George's slumps a little further. Historians will read some interesting pages devoted to Labouchere, as intermediary between Mr. Gladstone and the Irish during the 'eighties, while a remark of Mr. Gladstone's in 1895 shows us how different he was from all other men.

> The death-blow was at the General Election. It was a dreadful time at Dalmeny. Somebody asked me before what majority I thought was necessary. I did not know, but said certainly three figures. I came to London with 40 majority and I warned Dillon that this meant that I should not be in at the death. Dillon replied that that was like a knife thrust in his heart. But I said I had already received the thrust.

Thus Mr. Gladstone introduced the second Home Rule Bill at the age of 83, without any delusions as to the result of his efforts.

As an administrator Herbert Gladstone was a success. His tenure of the Home Office was rich in useful measures, his enthusiasm for Prison Reform being particularly marked. On going to South Africa as first Governor-General, he quickly brought a wasp's nest about his ears by reprieving a native condemned for a sexual offence. All parties in the newly united South Africa united against Gladstone and the flames were fanned by the English press in the best American style. But Herbert emerged as a true Gladstone. The son of the man who made peace after Majuba would not truckle to the Boers on a point of justice.

Always Herbert was as "pleasant" as his tripos papers. Happy, healthy, modest and truthful, he led a busy useful life. On retirement from politics, he wrote his admirable book *After Thirty Years*, which revealed an unexpected literary power and had an unexpected success. The Wright case, though it stirred up some mud, further revived interest in Mr. Gladstone. Thus, though the death of Lord Gladstone coincided with the death of the Liberal Party, he did not entirely die in his enemy's day. For the great leader of the Liberal Party was again as lively as ever. Herbert sighed as a politician, but triumphed as a son.

FRANCIS BIRRELL

FAERY SEAS

Nonsuch: Land of Water. By WILLIAM BEEBE. Putnam. 21s.

Perhaps the man whose acquaintance with the waters of the earth goes no further than his bath or the cement pond in his garden, or the Channel as seen from the promenade at Brighton, had better be warned against Mr. Beebe, whose book is a dangerously fascinating account of oceans that seem to have come out of fairy tales. Nor is it recommended to the man who catches his pike and perch in quiet English meadows, for the fresh-water fisherman never believes anything he is told about another man's fish, and it might very well seem to him as if Mr. Beebe, being not only a zoologist but an imaginative writer, had invented the fairy butterflying fish, the blue sturgeons, the angel-fish, the peacock flounders with periscope eyes, the sea-horses, the striped grunts and silversides of which he sometimes speaks as casually as if they were all so many minnows or sticklebacks. But apart from this his book can be recommended to all kinds of readers, because *Nonsuch* is that rare type of book, the narrative of an expert who still has a boy's freshness of mind and excitement at new discoveries—qualities which make it easy for one to swallow its mass of erudition eagerly, as a boy might swallow a sugar-coated pill. It is as the adventurer, the seeker, that one visualises Mr. Beebe, hardly ever as the zoologist.

These chapters, he says, wrote themselves "in the intervals of diving, fishing, naming, dissecting—the serious study of fish in Bermuda," off the coast of which Nonsuch Island lies. Elsewhere he speaks of the importance of writing on the spot: "I was asked what I had seen, and at once the perfection of my inarticulate visions began to be dissected and distorted by being forced into the pitifully inadequate vehicle of human speech." So his writing has the smack and colour of quick-captured reality about it: he distrusts, evidently, zoological emotions remembered in tranquillity, knowing that in nature things are not even always what they look to be, let alone what they are remembered as having been. But "sea-lavender, seaside golden-rod, tassel plant, sea rocket, star-of-the-earth, mallow, rosy primrose, oleander, poor-man's-weatherglass, match-me-if-you-can—these are a delight to tell over, euphonious or meaningful, or both." And in Spring:

> Nonsuch is ablaze with thousands of pink stars as the oleanders burst forth: later comes the rose red of hibiscus, and gradually, in the autumn months, a background of golden spires sets the island again on fire. It is a pleasant alarm when a half-grown great blue heron rises with a sudden raucous outburst from the beach, or a young tropic bird squawks beneath your very feet, but to be surprised by a flower is an even keener joy. I recall a waste of grey and silver rocks, from which a tiny brilliant face looked up at me, and I saw my first scarlet pimpernel.

Pitifully inadequate vehicle of human speech! But he is, perhaps, right: for Nonsuch can offer, from its rocks and seashore and ocean-bed, wonders before which speech seems really pitiful. There are not only fish and flowers—fish that fly and flower-like fish—and birds and butterflies, with their passionate miracle of migration, and animals and trees (the chapters on lemmings and cedars are a delight), but wonders like the Halicystis, "no whit less wonderful than would be a living six-foot ant, or a fifty-

foot dog, or a hundred-foot man." This Halicystis, or sea-grape, is probably the largest cell in the world:

> The Bermudans call them sea-bottles, and after storms they are sometimes found in dozens washed ashore along the south beach of Nonsuch Island. They have great resilience, and when fresh and alive will bounce five or six feet from a smooth surface. When the sun shines brightly upon a group on the sand, just as they have been left by the waves, their beauty is that of polished emeralds—the sunlight passing through their translucent green substance and deeply staining their thin shadow.

Under the sea, on an ocean floor lit by constellations of fish, sun-jellies and great moon jelly-fish, other wonders stir the emotions and dazzle the intelligence terrifically. There is no end to it all. The range of Mr. Beebe's erudition is immense and his thirst for fresh and more miraculous knowledge is insatiable. It is excellent to know that he is planning three other books.

H. E. BATES

THE LADY REBECCA ROLFE

Pocahontas. By DAVID GARNETT. Chatto and Windus. 8s. 6d.

In the rather turgid and occasionally muddled pages of Captain John Smith's *Discoverie of Virginia* there are a few passages in which there is a clearing of bright light: whether John Smith knew it or not in the midst of his bloody, practical, empire-building career, suddenly romance, lyric romance, shone on him. The light is Pocahontas: and those who would properly appreciate Mr. Garnett's fine imaginative piece of historic fiction should look at Smith's own record of the "Nonparell of Virginia," and see how lovingly, and how truthfully he has made out of obscure hints and scarcely understood incidents and speeches this splendid portrait of a girl who, when she was baptised, should have been given the name of Ruth rather than of Rebecca.

The tradition of Pocahontas, and the fame of her loving-kindness, has persisted in Virginia, where people still boast of descent from her. In England she is almost forgotten, except when some inquisitive Cockney asks the reason of La Belle Sauvage, as a name of a London house. She was the daughter of Powhatan, the chief of a small tribe of American Indians, a chief, whom the English adventurers exalted to the position of Emperor of Virginia. It would have been easy to idealise or sentimentalise her and her legend. Mr. Garnett has preferred the far harder work of giving us, with exquisite detail and noble intention, the portrait of a young woman who slowly moves away from her customary world of savagery; yet moves from it with an acute remembrance of the fine things in her tribal life, and an acute sense of the ridiculous, debased or cruel things in the life of the English. Mr. Garnett has done nothing better than this reconstruction of the Indian life; its swift and alarming passage from idyllic, childish happiness to bestial, childish cruelty; its grave ceremony, and wild abandonment; its simple candours and cunning deceits; its recklessness, its generosity, its meaningless unkindness. Rarely, and then only in a humorous aside, as in the suggestion that American oratory, and its generous profusion, owe something to the Red Indians' interminable speeches, does Mr. Garnett comment or draw any moral. We are left to see, through Pocahontas' eyes and in her meditations, that the remarkable thing about the difference between civilised and savage, English and Indian, is that there is so little difference. Only likeness, indeed, would make people so mistrust and misunderstand each other. Yet a difference remains. Pocahontas finds it when, believing Smith to be dead, she marries John Rolfe, and he works all the time. He is never done working. She finds the reason when, in England, they visit his home, and in the settled order of the English country she sees what this work would accomplish. Life is not only to be permanent—some Indians must have felt that—it is to display its permanence by its setting. The little girl—she was only twelve or thirteen years old when she saved John Smith's life—finds in him and in his talk something that explains to her inexplicable things in her own heart. Her Indian life often delights her, sometimes bores her, sometimes revolts her. This life in England, and by European standards, of which Smith speaks, this life excites, provokes, puzzles, entrances her. So, when she has been entrapped as a prisoner (after Smith has left the country) she falls in love with John Rolfe, marries him, and goes to the country of her dreams.

No more El Dorado for her than was Virginia for Ralegh. (One of the best scenes in the story is her meeting with that spancelled eagle). She enjoys London, but she falls ill. Rolfe is jealous of the courtiers who would treat his wife as a show in a booth. The number of people and the pressure of buildings crowd on her. Then she and Rolfe decide to return; she sets off, and dies on ship-board at Gravesend.

It is difficult not to treat *Pocahontas* as a biography; but it is a novel, and one which should give Mr. Garnett a new and higher reputation. How much he has invented, apart from his characters' speeches (though some of these are from the records) and thoughts, does not matter, because he has made the book triumphantly of a piece. Here is Pocahontas as Smith knew her, but as Smith could never know her: for he did not understand the child's passionate love, and passionate longing. He appreciated her loyalty, but even thought that might be from a God-given liking for England. Mr. Garnett shows us Pocahontas as a girl—the whole treatment of her friendship with Tom Savage (it was *The Bell*, by T. Savage, which became *La Belle Sauvage*) is charming in its idyllic quality—but as a girl who swiftly grows up under the influence of Smith and the contact of her people with the English. The battles and treacheries are kept in proper subordination; but anyone who expects a tale of Indians to be rather nerve-shocking will not be disappointed, though there is a grave, practical air about Mr. Garnett's treatment of torture and cruelty. When Rolfe, the widower, arrives the book gains in depth and richness, as does Pocahontas' character; and in the chapters on their life in England Mr. Garnett is brilliant. The slight sketch of that deboshed, silly court of James I is trenchantly done; and Mr. Garnett, thank goodness, does not find the men of the early seventeenth century impossible to understand. Here is Ralegh.

> Melancholy brooded over him; he was restless; his questions about Virginia were abrupt and inconsecutive and gave the impression that he knew the answers to them already. Reality meant little to him. He was the greatest of prospectors; he hugged the shadow, for the substance was to him a shadow. Solid gold, broad acres of earth, jewels, ships, men, all these ran through his fingers and dissolved as though they never had existed; but the gold of dreams, the jewelled cities of imagination, the wide stretches of unknown lands, and El Dorado itself, were his forever, and remained through life his almost personal possessions. If he was a legend during his life, it was because once or twice this fool gold of imagination was unloaded at his feet in solid lumps and kept its reality when it passed into the hands of other men.

It is the dream which has possessed Mr. Garnett—Smith's dream, Rolfe's dream, but beyond all, the dream of Pocahontas. This is a stirring novel, an exciting story full of lively action, of humour and a careful observation of character; but it is first and last the history of that Princess Pocahontas, the Lady Rebecca, who forsook her forests and her rivers, her father's house and her people, who bare a son to her Norfolk husband, and journeyed from the other side of the globe to find, in her country of dreams, grave's end.

R. ELLIS ROBERTS

THE MAID

The Sword of God: Jeanne d'Arc. By GUY ENDORE. Grayson and Grayson. 18s.

Mr. Endore's book has the faults and virtues of the new popular school of biography. It is of unusual interest, for it takes us, indirectly, behind the scenes: it shows us, in fact, the mood from which picturesque history is derived. For Mr. Endore is an acute scholar, and in order to regain his own peace of mind he has found it necessary to display his preliminary difficulties and to justify his practice. Two-thirds of his book is a sympathetic, emotional study of Jeanne d'Arc in the story-book fashion of to-day: the last third is a brilliant, caustic study of the vast literature which has accumulated around the subject. He is as frank as Master George Washington caught with axe in hand:

> In short, if you will have it baldly, I did what I listed, picked whatever pleased my taste for truth and beauty and thus formed my biography.

His defence of this method takes more than a hundred and twenty pages, and is, in fact, longer than Mr. G. B. Shaw's prefaces to his earlier plays. Briefly, his method is this: he points out the failure of the rationalist school of historians to explain the mystery of the Maid, the absurdities of the Celticists and diabolists, the obsessions of the psycho-analytic group which has tackled the problem of "the Voices." To quote the contradictory conclusions of modern scientists or thinkers, working from different angles, is a well-known and rather school-boyish device of religious apologists, who wish us to swallow, holus-bolus, their own wonders and signs. But Mr. Endore is not a religious apologist, nor is he,

necessarily, a believer. Unconsciously, indeed, he seems to be an euhemerist, but that is not to the point. Actually Mr. Endore believes that the problem of Jeanne d'Arc, or rather the real, living woman, can be discovered plainly in the actual documents and statements of the Trial. From those statements and reports, prejudiced or otherwise, emerges the actual heroine of France.

The problem of Jeanne d'Arc is both tantalisingly simple and obscure; and one may admire Mr. Endore's attempt to rescue a real and noble figure from the fogs of rumour or opinion. The problem has been rendered all the more difficult because it touches history and belief at every point. The devout Catholic may accept the mission of the Maid, but it is difficult nowadays to accept the direct intervention of the Deity or the saints in military or patriotic matters: intervention has gone the way of the Divine Right of Kings. English research has been complicated by shame and bad conscience ever since Shakespeare disgraced himself by his reference to Jeanne d'Arc. Southey attacked Voltaire's notorious lampoon; Lang is a gentle champion compared with the ironic Anatole France. Hase, in 1850, anticipated Mr. Shaw by discovering the unconscious Protestantism of the French girl. Michelet saw in her campaigns the expression of a rising nationalism, and Martin has traced the evils which sprang from a "narrow and vicious" nationalism. The Celticists see in the story a last trial of strength between a secret, organised paganism and Christianity. Miss Murray, and others released by *The Golden Bough* from fear of diabolism, find in the events an expression of the Dianic cult of witchcraft. Psycho-analysts trace the ecstatic visions of Jeanne to amenorrhea, with considerable ingenuity. Saint, amazon, tortured genius, witch, peasant girl, mascot, symbol, legend, rumour: an increasing literature adds its perplexities. Spiritualists, Protestants, Freemasons, Socialists, anti-clericalists, feminists, individualists, priests, cardinals—all claim Jeanne d'Arc. The Church came last in the disedifying game of grab, for reasons wittily debated by Mr. Shaw in his *Saint Joan*.

A mirage is clear and complete in detail, and the Trial in which Mr. Endore finds actual fact may be as deceptive. In it were focused, after all, many minds, motives, beliefs: who can foretell the drama which a trial scene shapes for itself from pressure of conflicting minds? Mr. Endore does not concentrate, unfortunately, on the Trial. He is constantly dropping into the puerilities of hagiographers—"Goodbye all, church and garden, hedge and meadow, goodbye." He cannot distinguish absorbing emotion from sentimentality. His book, however, does give us a glimpse of the modern pictorial biographer at work.

WHIST AND BRIDGE

Contract Whist. By HUBERT PHILLIPS. Faber and Faber. 6s.

Psychic Bidding. By DOROTHY RICE SIMS. Allen and Unwin. 2s. 6d.

The Direct (British) System of Contract Bidding. By CAPTAIN LINDSAY MUNDY. Revised edition. Rich and Cowan. 3s. 6d.

Few events in the social history of our time have been more surprising than the sudden rise of Bridge, followed by the almost complete disappearance of Whist from the card-tables of polite society. For two centuries or more Whist had held an undisputed sway. Other games of cards might have their vogue—Macao, Baccarat, Nap, Loo and Poker—but Whist remained supreme. "A clear fire, a clean hearth and the rigour of the game" was, as we know, the celebrated wish of old Mrs. Sarah Battle, sitting bolt upright in her high chair, who "next to her devotions loved a good game of Whist," who was never known to take out her snuff-box when it was her turn to play or to snuff a candle in the middle of a game. At St. Helena the exiled Napoleon played it with the two Miss Balcombes, one of whom in the excitement of the moment once addressed him familiarly as "Boney." At Oatlands F.M. the Duke of York, who was destined to survey the world from a loftier column than Napoleon himself ever occupied, used to play Whist through the night with Greville and his friends for "fives and ponies" (£5 points and £25 on the rubber) as long as any three of them could be found to play with him. And during the rest of the century—in club, in common room, and in country house—Whist was recognised by people of intelligence as the greatest and best of all card games.

But in the autumn of 1894 a change occurred. The game of Biritch or Russian Whist—now known as Straight Bridge—suddenly appeared in London. Its entry was modest and unpretentious. It seemed at first to be no more than a slight variation of the old game, and in one respect was certainly superior. The occasional playing of a hand in No Trumps, as an alternative to a suit declaration, was generally recognised as an admirable idea. But the other principal innovation—the exposing of one of the hands—was more questionable. It was held, and is still held, by many expert players—amongst them by Mr. Hubert Phillips, the author of the first of these books—that to play a hand with the other three hands "up" requires a finer skill, a nicer calculation and judgment, than to play it, as you play it in Bridge, with a dummy. For some years the two games continued in friendly rivalry, but in 1907, just twelve years after its arrival, the new game of Bridge received an extraordinary accession of strength. The introduction of an auction to determine the declaration of trumps or no trumps—which has since been converted by a natural development into a contract—made the new Auction Bridge a far better game than the old "Straight Bridge" had ever been. From that moment Whist was doomed. The question of its final extinction seemed only a question of time. But is there indeed no hope of its revival? Is it already so out of date that it is incapable of improvement to meet our modern needs? Is Contract Bridge so perfect a game that no alternative is now possible? Mr. Hubert Phillips claims that in the new game of Contract Whist, of which he has written a clear and admirable exposition, you will find the answer to these questions. Contract Whist is essentially the old Whist which we played in our youth with the added attractions of an auction and contract. It is simpler than Contract Bridge, and more exciting than Straight Whist. So it combines, in his opinion, the advantages of both; and is the best game of cards yet invented. At present it is, perhaps, hardly more than an experiment; but an experiment that was well worth making.

The second of these books is an amusing attempt to explain "the principles"—or the tricks—of psychic bidding. Mrs. Sims, who claims to be the originator of the "system," tells us incidentally how the name arose. She wished to write psychological, but being notoriously weak in spelling could only get as far as "sycic"; and the name stuck. "Psychics," she says, "are to Bridge what futurism is to art—a camouflage for lack of knowledge."

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★THE WORD "MONOTYPE" IS THE REGISTERED TRADE MARK OF THE MONOTYPE CORPORATION, LTD. OF LONDON

The last book is a revised edition of a treatise which first appeared a year ago, to suit the new Bridge laws. The system it recommends is quite a sound one, and has a fair number of adherents. But it is a pity that its author should think it necessary to recommend it by so absurd a title. Why drag in (British)? P. M.

THE WORLD WITHIN AND WITHOUT

The Theory of Knowledge and Existence. By W. T. STACE. Oxford University Press. 18s.

Whatever other merits or defects may be imputed to Mr. Stace's book, its qualities of clear expression and intellectual candour will not be overlooked. There is no jargon, no idle parade of technicalities, and no reluctance to admit that proof is often impossible and "explanation" no more than frank acceptance of inexplicable fact. With speculations upon the nature of ultimate reality Mr. Stace is little concerned. The mention of "existence" in his title merely signifies that his problem is to discover how we get to know a world that we inhabit but do not create, and how we can be assured that this rich environment of persons and things has more substance in it than the phantasmagoria of a solitary dreamer who will never awake from sleep. Knowledge, Mr. Stace declares, is indissolubly tied to the "given," and the given, relatively at least to knowledge of an external world, consists primarily in sense-presentations, which fall far short of the status of "things," but are exemplified rather in the moving colour-patches apprehended by sight. Mr. Stace includes, however, certain relations, notably resemblance and its opposite, and, turning to the internal world of the self, he finds another given element in our awareness, not indeed of an ego, but of acts such as thinking and willing. Self-knowledge such as this arises simply from the contrast of activity and passivity. We perceive a colour-patch whether we will or no, but when, growing weary of it, we turn our eyes elsewhere, we become conscious of our own activity.

Now all this, according to Mr. Stace, carries us not an inch beyond solipsism. He scoffs at the nervous distaste for that condition betrayed by some philosophers, and firmly insists that the original home of each one of us can only be "the world of the solitary mind." By what steps, then, and with what right do we claim to pass beyond it? The chief instrument, Mr. Stace replies, is not inference but "construction," and "the essential character of a construction is that it is a belief in something which is not given, and cannot be inferred from the given." Thus we construct the continued existence of an unperceived table; we construct everyday "things," or, again, we construct vast media like the ether of physics, so that finally we have to distinguish between *factual* and *constructive* existence, the factual being whatever is or will be perceived, while the constructive is beyond perception either now or always. In the growth of knowledge, however, inference does play an important part; for Mr. Stace contends that the discovery of other minds must precede knowledge of an independent world, and that discovery (unlike some other philosophers) he attributes to inference based on awareness of ourselves.

We have not space to sketch the whole process of construction as described by Mr. Stace, but his theory, like so many others, provokes a doubt whether this veracious history of the mind's development may not, after all, be a logical myth. The solipsism in which Mr. Stace would imprison our mental infancy amounts only to the fact that each man has his own experience and no one else's. But from that restriction, surely, we never escape. Of the most sophisticated philosopher it is as true as of the primeval savage that he must look out of his own windows, without part or lot in other men's eyes or ears. On the other hand, that we ever are actually at a stage when nothing but colour-patches, noises and smells is apprehended is highly doubtful. The truth that each sense has a peculiar and incommunicable function belongs to physiology, with a dash of physics. To argue that our original mental condition is thus determined is to mistake a fiction of analysis for historical fact. It is assumed that understanding must await the arrival of the indubitable (but solipsistic) "given," and then proceed to interpret or construct, but that assumption is neither warranted by evidence nor sufficient to explain the knowledge (or, it may be, the beliefs) that we contrive to establish.

Besides the "given," Mr. Stace allows no other tie to knowledge but the absolute necessity of logic, which may almost be reduced to the law of contradiction. The alleged necessity of mathematics, regarded as a separate department, he denies; for mathematical truth is not mere internal self-consistency, but a body of propositions referring to an outside reality and tested, as to its truth or falsity, thereby. Although Mr. Stace's account of logic itself is somewhat marred by his too ready acceptance of Mills' travesty of the Aristotelian syllogism, his general conclusions about the function of reasoning, as compared with construction, hypothesis, and other factors in the advance of knowledge, may still be taken on their merits. There is an interesting chapter on scientific knowledge, and the final effort to define the nature of truth is at least not more unsuccessful than most similar attempts.

IRISH ATMOSPHERE

Conversation Piece. By M. J. FARRELL. Collins. 7s. 6d.

Convention decrees that a story should have a plot and a beginning and an ending as though life were a tidy affair keeping within the bounds we set for it. In these days when we discard one convention only to adopt another, our novelists who claim to represent life have merely changed the period of a life in which a story begins or ends and abandoned the tidiness.

Miss Farrell, who is an artist, will have none of these rules. She writes of the things she has experienced and seen. Not a brown twig in a winter wood, not a shadow on a wet Irish road, escapes her notice. If she were willing to subscribe to the convention of novel writing, her characters, who, while being modern, have a delightful eighteenth-century air, would not permit her. They live from the moment one is introduced to them, but in their own manner. That manner of living—and surely they could not find a pleasanter one, although all may not agree with it—takes the reader from morning till night through the long loveliness of Irish country life which still holds a magic peculiarly its own. I know no one who has done this better than Miss Farrell. The beauty of her writing may disarm the prejudices of those who do not feel about hunting as she does. It is a strange and bewildering fact that one may find the country in the occupation of hunting a living thing, or in shooting, as in no other way, which must account for the fact that many gentle and soft-hearted people still follow these pursuits.

The author has given the scene which she knows so well through the eyes of one Oliver, an English cousin of the house of Pullinstown and an artist. This device is not only because lookers-on see most of the game, but rather an excuse for her own artist's vision. There are descriptions of country, of early morning rides which almost succeed in capturing the uncapturable magic of that hour and occupation. And through Oliver's eyes—he being not too conventional an artist and only, one suspects, a cover for the author—we see the country house with its great lodge gates proportioned by Adam, its "sad grey elegance," and the high windows which "held a blank and unassailable stare of dignity." With him we look from his window in the early morning and see Willow and Dick ride out of the stable yard:

> and walk their horses away from sight into the slowly silvering morning. The breathless picture they made is with me still—both sitting a little carefully, perhaps, with saddles still cold on their horses' backs. . . . Bright and unkind the two blood-horses looked in the grey light, and their riders forlorn in the gallantry of the very young passed on to face who knows what horror of schooling in cold blood at that deathly hour.

One could not indeed capture Willow and Dick and their father Sir Richard and his enchanting old lady love, Lady Honour, and her no less enchanting sister Beauty, in their fairy castle that seems made for them, and constrain them into a conventional story. Such a story requires sentiment even in these days, and there is a lovely heartlessness about this book (which may prove many things to the opponents of fox hunting), even though the characters love each other and hurt each other with their love. That seems to belong to it, as if anything so heavy as a heart would weigh down the delicacy of the story, breaking it like a dream. It has much of the quality of a dream; the house through which one may walk with the author, the two white terriers going ahead, glimmering in a dim Irish country house passage and limping on three legs "after the manner of all good terriers," the vague half-realised beauty of the dusty furniture, the blue light in the Waterford glass and the dim, delicate colours of the old china, the "tall cold rooms" on a frozen wet August day, and the spring fields.

The dogs and horses are as important or more important than the human beings—alive and full of character. The horses are lovely pictures (the young horses in the field), or terrifyingly

By David Garnett

POCAHONTAS

OR THE NONPARELL OF VIRGINIA

MR. GARNETT'S new book is the longest and most ambitious he has yet attempted. He has set himself the task of imaginatively recreating the life of an extinct race, and of telling the story of one of the most picturesque people in history. Princess Pocahontas is a figure whose romance provides exactly the material best suited to Mr. Garnett's genius. Born about 1595, she was the daughter of an Indian chief of Virginia. From her childhood until her death at the age of twenty-one, her life was inseparable from the early history of the first English colony at Jamestown, and with its violence, its cruelty, and its beauty illustrates the extraordinary conditions under which colonists and Red Indians lived. The Governor of Virginia brought this Indian princess to London, where she created an immense curiosity. She died at Gravesend in 1616, leaving a son whom she bore to an English adventurer.

The author has studied his subject deeply; has read all that there is to read about her, and has visited those parts of Virginia where her youth was spent. His is a complete picture, one which is fittingly concluded by a pageant of the glittering court of James I, where among others are seen Queen Anne of Denmark, Ben Jonson, and Raleigh, who is about to set out for his Guiana voyage. No material could be more engrossing, and no writer more fitted to do it justice.

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beautiful as Dick and Willow ride out on them in the early morning, cold in the saddle. An exquisite coldness is part of the atmosphere.

It is Ireland seen from the big house, the inmates of which have acquired so much from the country to which their ancestors came as conquerors. They have all the ways of speech, of thought, of evasion, of the people. In their attitude towards that other Ireland there is perhaps something of the aloofness, an air of looking on at a play, which accounts for the callous dismissal by Willow of the question of a madman drowning his dog. "I wonder, will he drown his dog? He will." There are doors Miss Farrell has not opened—those of the real Ireland which she uses as a background for her characters and their sporting life. If she should open these doors, she must give us a rich and lovely book indeed.

PAMELA HINKSON

CHARLES REX

Charles I: A Study. By F. M. G. HIGHAM. Hamish Hamilton. 10s. 6d.

Remote as it probably is from the author's intention, one is reminded while reading this admirable book on Charles I of Trotsky's chapter on the late Tsar. Both Charles, Darnley's grandson, and Nicholas suffered from the same physical debility, a sluggishness affecting their mentality. It was responsible for their self-centred gloom and emotional inhibitions which included a want of pity for man and beast. Again, both monarchs were too dependent on others, and, being good family men, were too dependent on imperious and intriguing wives. Henrietta was by no means crazy and is sometimes maligned, but are not the vehement attempts to galvanise Nicholas into action and the demands that he should assert himself in the Tsarina's last frantic letters identical with Henrietta's when Charles was at the Civil War front? "My whole hope lies in your firmness," insists Henrietta, "and when I hear anything to the contrary I am mad."

We do not yet know if the Tsar met his end at a more important moment in constitutional history than Charles. At all events, Charles differed from Nicholas in that he had Stuart brains and knew something of the significance of his defeat. It is a pity that his scaffold speech is not included here in full, for there is more drama in those words than in all the externals and good manners of his death. Viewed personally instead of politically the story of Charles's struggle lacks subtlety. The modern theory of the Star Chamber and other expedients being used to curb, not the liberties, but the exuberances of a country gentry grown rich and arrogant is not discussed. We have instead, as Pater said in another connection, "the sad fortunes of some English kings as conspicuous examples of the ordinary condition. As in a children's story, all princes are in extremes."

A point which neither here nor elsewhere has ever received the attention it deserves is the influence on Charles of his chaplain and early confident, Matthew Wren, afterwards a domineering Bishop of Ely, and Sir Christopher's uncle. Just before Charles came to the throne Wren was sounded by Laud and others as to what was to be expected. They were reassured, but also warned that in scholarship Charles fell short of his father. Every writer emphasises Buckingham's part, but Wren also accompanied Charles to Spain, and later on went with his king to Scotland. His subsequent history, with its long defiant imprisonment during the Commonwealth, is enough to show what effect he must have made on the mind of Charles.

Sentiment and polemic have been poured out on Charles to such an extent since poor Mr. Dick's time that to-day he would be more squeamish than ever about a mention of that highly controversial and severed head. Indeed, one might suppose that the subject needed unusual novelty in treatment, but our misgivings are overcome in this book, which amply justifies itself by its sincerity and straightforward narrative skill. Except for a slight falling-off towards the end in this particular it is written without sentimentality of either Whig or Charles the Martyr variety, a moderation which shows a clear grasp of authorities. But since a mention has been made of Wren's name, may we pedantically chaff the author for including in a picturesque description the spire of old St. Paul's which was burnt down in 1561?

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SHORTER NOTICES

The Interpretation of the Atom. By FREDERICK SODDY. Murray. 21s.

Professor Soddy's *Interpretation of Radium*, published in 1909, was for long the general reader's best introduction to the discoveries of radioactivity in which the author had played so important a part. This book has been written to supersede the earlier one, and to connect up radioactivity with other aspects of atomic physics. In this new task the author has been only moderately successful. The first and larger half, dealing with the radioactive elements and with isotopes, is admirable both in clarity and in arrangement. But in the second half—that dealing with the general progress of atomic chemistry—Professor Soddy seems to have bitten off more than he can chew. Moreover, the will to chew seems lacking. He has come "to regard the purely formal and mathematical presentation of physical theories as a disguise and evasion of the real problems rather than as any solution of them." Now it is true that the quantum theory has reached a state where the mathematics is too difficult for it to be possible to apply to many of the problems that confront laboratory workers. But its successful application in simple cases, and the light thrown upon exceptional phenomena (which Professor Soddy professes to despise), show that it is firmly rooted in reality. Since the author has to admit that the invasion of various fields by quantum ideas have "justified themselves by results," it is difficult to appreciate the intellectual grounds for his grudging attitude towards one of the most remarkable and successful theories of all time.

Pioneer Days in Arizona. By FRANK J. LOCKWOOD. Macmillan. 20s.

Arizona was the last American State admitted to the union, and she remained in a state of frontier exuberance till quite recently. Her list of bad men and quick-shooting officials of the law was a long one, as befits a sovereign commonwealth, one of whose liveliest journals is the *Epitaph*, organ of the up and coming town of Tombstone. There have been other Arizona notables, the great Jesuit explorer and stock-raiser Father Kino, one of the greatest of missionaries; Don Garcia Lopez de Cardenas who, with his party, had the honour of discovering the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, and, in more recent times, such noteworthy figures as the trapper and explorer, Jedediah S. Smith, and Judge Meyer, a German druggist who administered quick justice with the aid of a law library composed of a *Materia Medica* and a treatise on *Fractured Bones*. Before all these were the Indians, the civilised Pimas and the Apaches, who were worthy to rank with the Iroquois and the Sioux among the mighty men of war. There was also the cattle king who laid the foundation of his fortunes by driving a flock of turkeys across the Sierra Nevada to Carson City from California. Professor

An open letter to the Right Hon.

J. Ramsay MacDonald

P.C., M.P.

THE PRIME MINISTER

Sir:

You are hailed as one of our greatest Prime Ministers—you are leading the world to disarmament and peace. Under your guidance the Nation, united and strong, is going forward with renewed confidence . . . and because the advance of Empire is so closely linked to the progress of industry, I venture to call your attention to our great step forward—the Kensitas Greater Service Plan.

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I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

P.S. Kensitas are mild—yet how they satisfy!

Jenkyn

p.p. J. Wix & Sons, Ltd.

Lockwood has made his book a chronicle of famous men rather than a history of the State, but his text and his numerous illustrations give some idea of an astonishing landscape and its scarcely less astonishing human figures.

Tom Tiddler's Ground. Edited by WALTER DE LA MARE. Collins. 5s.

Next to having a new book of children's poems by Mr. de la Mare surely the best thing to have is an anthology chosen by him. This little book, with its excellent illustrations and its charming notes, should quickly become the favourite book of any child who loves poetry. "Anon" is nobly represented, and here are Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Thackeray, Blake, Frances Chesterton, Coleridge, Stevenson and scores of others, ancient and modern. Mr. de la Mare has a genius for thinking with children; and he does not hesitate at times to give only a few verses from well-known poems.

Film Lady. By J. W. DRAWBELL. Collins. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Drawbell has found a subject for his new novel which is pat to the times. *Film Lady* is the story of Joy Raynor, film and stage star at the age of twenty-six, beautiful and ambitious, but overworked and still struggling to keep in the limelight which she has already earned. It is a portrait faithfully and realistically drawn. To the uninitiated the scenes at Elstree and Hollywood seem to be the real thing: they are at any rate full of life and movement. Apart from the studio scenes, the story moves in the familiar cinema world of fashionable restaurants, smart parties, and elaborately furnished flats. The dialogue is natural and easy, though there is perhaps too much of it; and the ending is refreshingly unexpected and unsentimental.

A Picture Book of Evolution. Adapted from the work of the late DENNIS HIRD. By Surgeon Rear-Admiral C. M. BEADNELL. Watts. 10s. 6d.

To-day, popular expositions of Evolution are by no means rare. A generation ago few writers presented the subject so attractively as Dennis Hird. His Picture Book was deservedly popular. Knowledge advanced and left it behind. It now appears again, fuller, fatter, renovated, rejuvenated, and introduced by Sir Arthur Keith. Admiral Beadnell has approached the task of bringing it up to the high-tide mark of modern scientific advance with zeal and industry. Even, indeed, with a certain gusto, for, in common with his friend Sir Arthur Keith, he nourishes an enthusiasm for the Doctrine of Evolution, and a reverence for Darwin's theory that is not now so common as it was in the days when Darwin's upholders marshalled their militant ranks in defence of their scientific convictions and took arms against a sea of enemies. Enthusiasm is a valuable ally in exposition, and Admiral Beadnell has done his job well. Little of the original work remains. More text, fresh information, excellent and copious illustrations, and some very useful appendices ought to recommend this adaptation of the Picture Book to many an inquiring young person and not a few still receptive old ones.

Love Lyrics From Five Centuries. Edited by G. C. HARRAP. Harrap. 12s. 6d.

It is a pity that this delicately chosen and admirably printed book had not been left to make its appeal without the thin and unimaginative illustrations by Baron Arild Rosenkrautz; rarely have we seen more ineffective decorations than these. Mr. Harrap's work is, on the whole, extraordinarily well done, and was worth doing. His range is wide, his taste catholic, and the arrangement of his selections, within its chronological framework, sensible.

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(SEE P. 17)

About Motoring

REDUCING RUNNING COSTS

IN these days when most incomes are down the continued ownership of a car presently appears to many unwilling economists as affording the only substantial cut which they can make in their normal expenses. (I assume that no reader is mean enough to economise on his charitable subscriptions.) It may not have occurred to some owners that a reduced economy is possible through minimising the expenses of car ownership. Supposing that an exchange of car is possible, a small car is naturally much cheaper to own than a larger vehicle. Tax, insurance, tyres, fuel, repairs, depreciation and other expenses can all be reduced by transferring to a smaller vehicle. This particular transfer is not easy either commercially or psychologically; and of the two problems the latter commonly furnishes the real obstacles. Leaving that battle to be fought out in the soul, a 1931 saloon of 16 h.p. originally priced at £300 has an exchange value at this moment of about £130. This £130 may be claimed from a horde of eager dealers against a new 1933 16 h.p. six-cylinder saloon (in which case a cash or instalment adjustment of £170 or so will be demanded); or against a 1933 baby car of 7 h.p. or so, in which case no cash adjustment will be needed. Few people have the moral control to accept the latter alternative, even if their banker presses it upon them.

But when the 1933 car is safely housed it is still possible to halve its running costs by judicious restraints. The fixed charges, whether it be a Rolls or a baby Austin, are the tax and the depreciation. Both these charges are outside the owner's control, but all the other costs vary with his temperament and personality. He may elect to insure it against every conceivable contingency, and to place the whole of these risks on the shoulders of an insurance company. Or he may decide to insure it only "with owner up," and to bear the first £5, £10 or more of each claim except third party liabilities from his own purse. If he is a good average driver the economical method will usually work out to his advantage. In my driving life I have generally paid full premiums; and I should be richer if I had uniformly carried the first £20 of every risk on my own back. Certain expenses—notably fuel and tyre costs—are intrinsically connected with mileage. The carless man thinks twice before he beckons to a taxi. He often walks or trains or buses or even stays at home rather than disburse motoring costs. Endow that same man with a car, and he will motor on innumerable annual journeys which in his carless days he would either have accomplished far more cheaply or cancelled altogether. The average life of a modern tyre, gently driven, is about 15,000 miles; and at least 5,000 miles of the 15,000 are accounted for by journeys which need not have been taken, and would never have been taken if the owner had in fact been a carless man. Similarly a typical gallon of petrol pushes some car or other twenty miles. A typical petrol bill for twelve months is £30, of which at least £10 represents pure self-indulgence. Possibly the greatest motoring extravagance is speed; and by speed is implied the habit of driving a car as near its limit as the roads will permit. Yesterday I was commissioned to get a secondhand car which had not yet completed its 10,000 miles. It evinced obvious signs of wear throughout its anatomy. Yet it had not been neglected. Such bearings as

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must be lubricated by hand were full of grease. Its panels shone, and its plating gleamed. But its owner is a roadburner; and his idiosyncrasies were faithfully registered in every detail of the mechanism. All the engine bearings displayed rather excessive wear. The rivets securing the shock absorber brackets to the frame lolled loosely in oval holes. The steering joints each registered a little play, which rendered the steering rattly and had produced a tendency to "shimmy." The brake adjustments had all been taken up to their limit. The tyres showed flats and a tolerable absence of tread. I knew without asking that this driver seldom extracted more than 6,000 miles out of a pair of back tyres, i.e., less than half their due mileage. I knew without asking that his fuel bill was at least 25 per cent. heavier than the typical owner of a sister car has to pay.

Over a long term of years quite astonishing economies are possible in the single item of garage costs. Far too many owners rent a convenient lockup or a space on the floor of some public garage. For less than the annual rent of a lockup a tenant's fixture garage can be installed wherever ground is available; and if such an installation should entail knocking a hole through a wall, and erecting a pair of gates, the first year will often refund the total outlay. Another set of economies is practicable whenever the owner possesses the energy to perform routine maintenance jobs for himself. Tyre inflation, greasing, tappet settings and the like are all tasks easily within the capacity of any individual who would be safe at the wheel of a car. Every one of them involves an expenditure when performed at a garage, and most owners fly to a garage at the faintest excuse. I know inexperienced women who regularly decarbonise their own engines with complete success; for if the job takes time and involves a little physical exertion it is by no means exacting in respect of intelligence. Lawyers are said to drink with great heartiness to the people who make their own wills; but garage owners are never heard to toast the motorists who do their own running repairs. If a particular owner shrinks, despite great impoverishment, from these labours and restraints, let him remember that he has an alternative economy unless he already owns the smallest size of motor car—for he can trade-off his present vehicle, and replace it by one which would pay a smaller tax, ride on smaller tyres, consume less fuel, and involve a lower insurance premium. If every avenue of economy is pursued the resulting reduction in annual costs can become quite vast.

I have not yet ventured to identify the supreme economy, because to do so might be useless. It consists simply of buying guaranteed secondhand cars instead of new cars. The most popular type of car on the British market is probably the family six, exemplified by the Morris Major or Morris-Oxford, and their compeers in rival catalogues. Setting the new price of such a car at round about £300, these same cars are purchasable at a drop of about £120 after a year's use. If such a car has been sensibly handled during its virgin year, or alternatively has been conscientiously reconditioned by a good dealer prior to resale, its lucky buyer suffers no actual sacrifice of genuine motoring values; but he is approximately £120 better off than if he had bought the very same car a year earlier; and £120 on an annual budget is an economy worth consideration.

R. E. DAVIDSON

Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

No. 3.—ALICE'S PARTY

Alice invited nine guests to her Christmas party. There were places set for the ten of them round a circular table.

"My place was numbered 0," said Alice. "The other nine places bore the numbers 1 to 9 (but not in that order). My guests were so seated that each girl's age was represented by the sum of the numbers to her immediate right and left. This was also true of mine.

"My age, and that of the girl sitting opposite to me, totalled 25. The ages of the girl to my immediate left, and the girl sitting opposite her, totalled 13. Of the girl two places to my left, and the girl opposite her, 19. And of the girl three places to my left, and the girl opposite her, 23.

"The girl who sat three places to my left was four years older than I. Pamela, one of the twins, sat on my immediate right, and the other twin, Patsy, sat opposite to her. In order of age, my other guests were Betty (eldest), Evelyn, Joan, Rosemary, Mabel, Isobel and Ruth."

Starting with Alice, and working in a clockwise direction, how were the ten girls seated round the table?

No. 1.—CHRISTMAS EVE

"A Golliwog in my Stocking."

No. 21 (*old series*).—DAUGHTERS OF BLUE STOCKING

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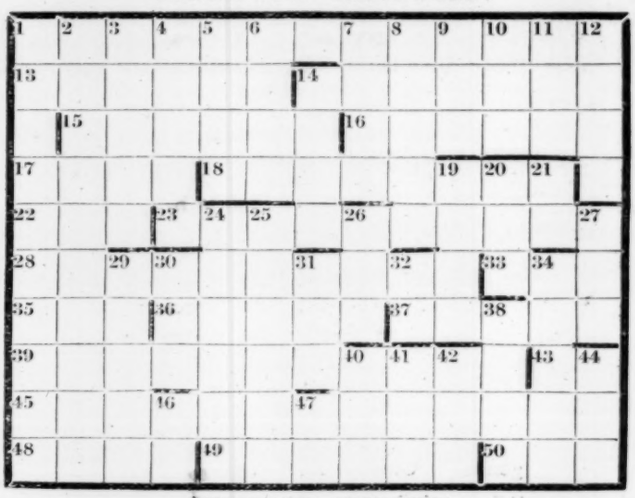
One set of Low's cartoons is awarded weekly to the sender of a correct solution, selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of the names of senders of all correct solutions submitted. All solvers qualify for book prizes on a cumulative-point basis. For particulars see THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of December 24th.

Solutions to the current problem must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, 10 Gt. Queen Street, London, W.C.2, and must reach this address not later than Tuesday, January 10th.

The PLAYTIME DINNER will be held at the Arundel Hotel, Arundel Street, W.C.2 (almost adjoining TEMPLE Station, District Railway), on Wednesday, Jan. 11th, at 7.30 p.m. for 8.0. Problem and Crossword solvers, *and their wives and friends*, are cordially invited. Tickets, 5s. per head, from Mr. S. T. Shovelton, King's College, Strand, W.C.2. *Applications must be received by first post on Tuesday, Jan.* 10th

TRINCULO'S CROSSWORD



MUDDLED FLUNKEY

ACROSS

1 Office relinquished by F.D.R.
13. Get rid of.
14. Reputations are apt to.
15. With not more starts his tenancy.
16. Cruel.
17. Effect of gale on yacht.
18. But these fly nevertheless.
22. Take the sailor from the frisking ones; only the tail remains.
23. The owlish would seem to suffer from it.
28. Your own canal.
33. Muselessly foolish.
35. Goes with a bang.
36. I address you, Mr. Conifer, I guess.
37. The joint suggests a message to a bookmaker.
39. Flexible rock.
43. Deputy without the gate.
45. Environment.
48. One of the best family.
49. See title.
50 *rev.* Rose and Crown.

DOWN

1. Not a popular invention.
2. Dr. 1 down was (probably).
3. Extol.
4. My nose and I are red.
5. My berry shouldn't.
6. Caused by a serpent.
7. Slender development of a hint.
8. Ordinary after treatment by 1 down.
9. Familiar in spectacles.
10 *rev.* Half of a grandfather.
11. Half of an epic.
12 *rev.* Not the place it used to be.
14. Despatched from the bird's home.
19. Mr. Parker's organ.
20 *rev.* What the ghost found Hamlet.
21. Yes, Signor.
24 *rev.* Disturbed ocean.
25, 27, Inflammation.
26. Period.
27. See 25.
29. 4 for example.
30 *rev.* What the messenger from the Ark said.
31 *rev.* Lion-tamer.
32. Yes, do.
34. Not so long for wisdom.
38. Lifeless.
40. See 47.
41. Resentment.
42. Possessive.
44. Orphaned inventor.
46. Silver turns up in the South.
47. Often picked before 40 *rev.*

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD.

ACROSS.—1. drawing-master. 12. eleemosynary. 15. cestus (two meanings). 16. paddles. 19. ovolo. 21. heretics. 23. riparian. 24. reals (*rev.*). 27. tanner. 29. ivory. 31. tiro (riot). 32. a-mica-ble. 35. ocerh (ochre). 37. (M)ada(m). 38. crous. 40. rape (pear). 41. ululation. 43. slovenliness.

DOWN.—1. decorators. 2. Aesop ("pose a" (*rev.*). 3. wet. 4. imuotna (Roumani(a) *rev.*). 5. nos (son *rev.*). 6. My (sore). 7. Andes. 8. tr. 9. eye. 11. Ross. 13. Levitical. 14. spear. 17. arnica. 20. veronal (*rev.*). 21. hiemal. 22. tlobrte (blotter). 25. eye. 26. answee (*rev.*). 28. Arepo (sator Arepo, *etc.*). 30. vacan(t). 33. ludi(crous) (*rev.*). 32. Lois (soil). 36. hur. 39. son (rire) (*rev.*). 42. li(me).

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR

1932 CAPITAL ISSUES AND THE EMBARGO ON ENTERPRISE—THE SPECULATOR'S CHANCES IN 1933—GREAT SCOTT! GREAT UNIVERSAL STORES!

THE dog-in-the-manger was a perverted animal but he could not have been so perverted and ill-tempered as a Government which will allow no public issues of capital for conversion schemes involving underwriting. Is the Treasury proposing to float another Government loan in the next month or so in order to fund part of the floating debt? Even if this were contemplated, the embargo on certain types of new issues does nothing to help Government operations. Capital is not used up except when it is used for destruction. If the slump is to be conquered by the natural forces of the capitalist system cheap money must be allowed to help industry. It is idle for the Government to say that there is no ban upon underwritten issues of capital for "new purposes." It is difficult enough in normal times to get issues of capital for entirely new works—the bulk of "new" capital issues being devoted to the purchase of existing rights or processes or similar transfers of private wealth—but any responsible financier could inform the Treasury that a Company's first endeavour, before embarking on new capital schemes, is to reduce the existing burden of fixed charges and in particular to call in expensive loans whenever possible. Industrial conversion schemes need the backing of underwriters as much as any "new" enterprise. The Government's embargo, maintained at a time when the investing public is beginning to view the prospects of an industrial recovery with greater confidence, is merely an embargo on trade revival and ought not to be tolerated a moment longer. The best way to break it is to ignore it, for it has no legal force. Wake up, you issuing houses! Give notice to the Treasury that you intend to act!

* * *

If the Government's financial policy is to bring cheap money to the help of industry, what did it accomplish last year? According to the Midland Bank's analysis the volume of new issues last year, excluding Government operations and conversion issues, was only £24½ millions in excess of those of 1931 when a financial and political crisis was raging. The revival of new financing of which there were some signs in the first half of the year was abruptly terminated by the ban on new issues imposed at the time of the War Loan Conversion Scheme. The modification of the ban in October merely served to send issues "to the dogs," for the only new demands for capital were for greyhound-racing tracks. Seven new greyhound companies were promoted in 1932, not to mention a new investment company to hold shares in the promotions. Government has never helped the get-rich-quick financiers so effectively since it passed the Films Act. But, after making all allowances for senseless Treasury restrictions, the figures of the Midland Bank, which I reproduce below, show up the poverty of private enterprise and indicate pretty clearly that if the depression is to be overcome by cheap money and new capital works it is the Government and public authorities who must lead the way:

CAPITAL ISSUES IN GREAT BRITAIN.
£'000's omitted.
(Figures of the Midland Bank.)

	1929. £	1930. £	1931. £	1932. £
Home.				
Public Authorities	3,553	46,022	10,307	32,612
Private Enterprise	155,849	81,334	32,281	51,205
Total	£159,402	£127,356	£42,588	£83,817
Per cent. of all issues	62.8	53.9	48.0	74.1
Empire.				
Public Authorities	£30,618	£56,027	£30,572	£25,698
Private Enterprise	23,794	14,019	6,260	3,175
Total	£54,412	£70,045	£36,832	£28,873
Per cent. of all issues	22.5	29.7	41.6	25.6
Foreign Countries.				
Public Authorities	£4,122	£12,551	£240	—
Private Enterprise	35,813	26,205	9,006	348
Total	£39,935	£38,757	£9,246	£348
Per cent. of all issues	15.7	16.4	10.4	0.3
All Issues	£253,749	£236,159	£88,666	£113,038

* * *

Of course I have only myself to blame! Having innocently pointed out that an investor could have turned £2,000 into £4,127 last year a reader as innocently asks how he could turn £2,000 into a modest £3,000 in 1933. But I did cover myself with the proviso that my imaginary investor had more than the average luck. Opportunities will, of course, arise for successful speculation this year, but I cannot be sure that they are lying in front of the investor at this very moment. It is possible that America, whose post election recovery has been killed by incredible political folly, will have to experience yet another panic before she does the right thing towards Europe and herself. If Wall Street breaks again this may be the great bargain opportunity for the investor, as it was last year, for American politicians can always be relied upon to act constructively when they are sufficiently frightened. Remember that it was the scare of a German default (on American loans) which gave birth to the Hoover moratorium—and a recovery in Wall Street. The scare of a complete boycott of American goods may lead to the offer of American gold for the relief of the financial stress in debtor countries—or to inflation. So I advise a careful watch on such falling dollar securities as Shell Union 5½ per cent. preferred shares—now 40 after being 58 in September, and likely to fall farther—for depressed but financially sound stocks of this type can easily double in market value when an American recovery comes to stay. If the World Economic Conference in which America must make all the advances is still-born, I would expect the struggle between sterling and gold to end in a victory for sterling. This implies that more countries will be forced off the gold standard—beginning with Belgium, Holland and Switzerland—that British exporters will lose some of the competitive advantages they now possess but that the volume of international trade in the sterling group will be larger. At the moment there is a run on the "heavy" industrial shares of Great Britain, but I cannot believe that large profits will be made out of this speculation. Personally I am attracted by certain depressed continental "equities"—particularly in countries which may be forced "off" gold—and by certain of the base metal producers. But I advise caution at the moment and will give my selections later on.

* * *

Few investors appreciate that when they are asked to subscribe capital for the conversion of a small private business into a vast public company they are indulging in a gamble as risky as the exploitation of a new invention. Last June I commented on the report of Great Universal Stores, a mail order business, started by the Rose family and H.M. Post Office. The directors at that time were Mr. Abraham Harris Rose, Mr. George Rose, Mr. Jack Perceval Rose, Mr. Nathan Rose and Mr. Harry Rose. Up to the date of the prospectus (July, 1931) which offered the 5s. ordinary shares at a premium of 300 per cent., everything was "roses, roses all the way." In the year to March 31st, 1932, the profits dropped from £410,767 to £267,389. Now, within seventeen months of the public offer of the shares, it is announced that matters have arisen "which need careful consideration," and that three directors have resigned, including the Chairman who founded the business and made a five-year agreement, "thereby securing continuity of the successful management." Three new directors, who include Sir Philip Nash, have joined the Board after an examination of the position by an eminent firm of accountants and by the Company's stockbrokers who represent a large number of the shareholders. A full statement of the Company's affairs is promised at the end of the financial year (March 31st). Meanwhile, the 5s. shares, which have been as high as 23s. 6d. in 1932, now stand at 8s. 9d. The circumstances demand that the Stock Exchange Committee should make an investigation into last year's selling of this Company's ordinary shares.

PHILOSOPHY

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